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MODEL ESSAYS FOR SCHOOL
CERTIFICATE AND MATRICULATION

MODEL ESSAYS
FOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
AND MATRICULATION

BY

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PREFACE

THESE are models of essays by well-known writers on subjects which come within the experience or knowledge of matriculation students. Some of the subjects have appeared on examination papers : all of them are subjects which can be regarded as " examination types ". A wide choice is given.

There are two corresponding lists of titles. List 1 consists of over a hundred essay subjects. Models of forty of these are given, and List 2 consists of the titles of these models.

Here are some suggested methods of treatment :

1. Some essays may be used to illustrate how the authors have worked out some conclusion or have driven home some " central point " (e.g. 1, 6*a*, 11). So few matriculation students have a central idea or any real point to their essays, which usually consist of several disconnected ideas.

2. Pupils can attempt one of the essays in List 1. *After* they have written their essays, they can compare their ideas with those in the model essay given (List 2). Pupils thus obtain two sets of ideas on a subject. *N.B.*—only very few of the extracts are on exactly the same subjects as the corresponding subjects in List 1.

3. Sometimes it is useful to " analyse " a model—that

is, make a list of ideas paragraph by paragraph, to see how the author has thought out and arranged a scheme for his essay (e.g. 1, 3, etc.). Before this analysis is made, pupils may be required to write down a list of their own ideas on the subject. Opening sentences repay study.

4. Other models may be studied for their style alone.

5. It is better to attempt an essay first, and then read and study a model on the same or a similar subject ; but occasionally a model can be studied first and, after some days, an attempt at reproducing it can be made, or an essay on a similar subject attempted. Other methods of treatment can be thought out.

All the extracts have been used with "General Schools" and with Evening Students, and have been received enthusiastically by them. The aim throughout has been to interest the student and to help him in his own essay-writing.

T. S. J.

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INTRODUCTION

“ON GOOD AND BAD STYLE IN PROSE”

(From *Letters to my Grandson, on the Glory of English Prose*,
by The Hon. Stephen Coleridge)

MY DEAR ANTONY,

I am now going to write to you about the literature of England and show you, if I can, the immense gulf that divides distinguished writing and speech from vulgar writing and speech.

There is nothing so vulgar as an ignorant use of your own language.

Every Englishman should show that he respects and honours the glorious language of his country, and will not willingly degrade it with his own pen or tongue.

“We have long preserved our constitution,” said Dr. Johnson; “let us make some struggles for our language.”

There is no need to be priggish or fantastic in our choice of words or phrases. Simple old words are just as good as any that can be selected, if you use them in their proper sense and place.

By reading good prose constantly your ear will come to know the harmony of language, and you will find that your taste will unerringly tell you what is good and what is bad in style, without your being able to explain even

to yourself the precise quality that distinguishes the good from the bad.

Any Englishman with a love of his country and a reverence of its language can say things in a few words that will find their way straight into our hearts, Antony, and make us all better men. I will tell you a few of such simple sayings that are better than any more laboured writings.

On the 30th of June, 1921, in *The Times* In Memoriam column there was an entry: "To the undying memory of officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the 9th and 10th battalions of the K.O.Y.L.I. who were killed in the attack on Fricourt in the first battle of the Somme;" and below it there were placed these splendid words:

"Gentlemen, when the barrage lifts."

In February of 1913 news reached England of the death, after reaching the South Pole, of four explorers, Captain Scott, their leader, among them.

Shortly before the end Captain Oates, a man of fortune who joined the expedition from pure love of adventure, knowing that his helplessness with frozen feet was retarding the desperate march of the others toward their ship, rose and stumbled out of the tent into a raging blizzard, saying, "I dare say I shall be away some time." This was greatly said.

His body was never found; but the rescue party who afterwards found the tent with the others dead in it, put up a cairn in the desolate waste of snow with this inscription:

"Hereabouts died a very gallant gentleman, Captain L. E. G. Oates, Inniskilling Dragoons, who, on their return from the Pole in March 1912, willingly walked to his death in a blizzard to try to save his comrades beset with hardship."

All this was done, said and written very nobly by all concerned.

In Saint Paul's Cathedral there lies a recumbent effigy of General Gordon, who gave his life for the honour of England at Khartoum, and upon it are engraven these words :

"He gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, his heart to God."

Even the concentrated terseness of Latin cannot surpass these examples of the power of the simplest and shortest English sentences to penetrate to the heart.

English can be used, by those who master it as an organ of expression, to convey deep emotion under perfect control, than which nothing is more moving, nothing better calculated to refine the mind, nothing more certain to elevate the character.

Whenever a man has something fine to communicate to his fellow-men he has but to use English without affectation, honestly and simply, and he is in possession of the most splendid vehicle of human thought in the world.

All the truly great writers of English speak with simplicity from their hearts, they all evince a spirit of unaffected reverence, they all teach us to look up and not down, and by the nobility of their works which have

penetrated into every home where letters are cultivated, they have done an incalculable service in forming and sustaining the high character of our race.

Clever flippant writers may do a trifling service here and there by ridiculing the pompous and deflating the prigs, but there is no permanence in such work, unless—which is seldom the case—it is totally devoid of personal vanity.

We may be sure that these books do not in the faintest degree represent the true and living literature of the times. They will pass away and be forgotten as utterly as are the fashion plates and missing-word competitions of ten years ago.

Therefore, Antony, be sure that the famous and living literature of England, that has survived all the shocks of time and changes of modern life, is the best and properest study for a man to fit him for life, to refine his taste, to aggravate his wisdom, and consolidate his character.

Your Loving old

G. P.

1. TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

(From *The Times*—Third Leaders)

WHEN a train draws up in a railway station those who are already seated in it are subjected to the inquisition of a hundred anxious eyes. Intending passengers, doubtful which compartment to choose, hurry up and down the platform, hesitate, seize the handle of a door and release it, consult among themselves and finally take the plunge.

What reasons prompted this man, after so much mental debate, to choose ourselves as his travelling companions? There was as much room elsewhere ; there was a corner seat to be had next door ; the air we breathe is not more fresh than the air in a dozen other compartments. If it was not superior comfort that drew him towards us, the cause of his coming must lie in ourselves. We must be, if not more attractive, at least less repellent than those whom he has inspected, considered, and deliberately passed over. He and all the others who, a few minutes ago, were hesitating on the platform have, consciously or subconsciously, made a psychological selection. In extreme cases the cause of retreat is plain enough. Babies, invalids, and boys with musical instruments in visible action are almost a guarantee against invasion ; indeed experienced and churlish travellers have been known to carry with them bundles of human appearance, feeding-

bottles, and penny whistles, which, conspicuously displayed, have again and again safeguarded their privacy. But for what reason, when outward things are equal, does a man incline towards one compartment and shun another? What is the swift summary he makes of the features seen dimly through a window? What principles guide his hasty judgment?

It depends, we may suppose, upon his secret purpose. If the train is a race-train and he intends before long to invite his companions to a game of chance and skill, his eye is eager for victims; stolid matrons he will avoid, adventurous youths will beckon him to profit. If, on the other hand, he has in his pocket a folding chess-board with which he proposes to solve a problem on his way to the city, he will scan the train for signs of somnolence and taciturnity. If he wants to read his newspaper, he will look for a compartment with a complete equipment of newspapers so that no one may be tempted to read the back of his and frown when he dares to move it. If he wishes to talk, he will choose the idle; if to sleep, the tolerant; if to study human nature, a mixed company with spades and buckets and cameras bound upon its holiday.

And since we are the companions he has chosen, suited to his special purpose, we may, so soon as his purpose becomes apparent, judge ourselves in the light of his implied opinion. If his hand goes to a little brown bag and produces a pack of cards, we may know that, at least in outward expression, we are not peculiarly sagacious; if he discloses a chess-board, we may guess that to an

inquisitive platform we present an appearance of conversational paralysis ; if he sits up and looks and looks and looks at us, as if he were taking notes for a pathological novel, we may write ourselves down for ever as specimens of the abnormal. To be chosen as a travelling companion is, in short, to be made the subject of an illuminating verdict. As the newcomer settles in his corner and stares or glances at us, we are able to see ourselves as at least one other man has seen us.

2. THE ENGLISH COUNTRY

(From *On England*)

STANLEY BALDWIN

To me, England is the country, and the country is England. And when I ask myself what I mean by England, when I think of England when I am abroad, England comes to me through my various senses—through the ear, through the eye, and through certain imperishable scents. I will tell you what they are, and there may be those among you who feel as I do.

The sounds of England, the tinkle of the hammer on the anvil in the country smithy, the corncrake on a dewy morning, the sound of the scythe against the whetstone, and the sight of a plough team coming over the brow of a hill, the sight that has been seen in England since England was a land, and may be seen in England long after the Empire has perished and every works in England has ceased to function, for centuries the one eternal sight of England. The wild anemones in the woods in April, the last load at night of hay being drawn down a lane as the twilight comes on, when you can scarcely distinguish the figures of the horses as they take it home to the farm, and above all, most subtle, most penetrating and most moving, the smell of wood smoke coming up in an autumn evening, or the smell of the scutch fires: that wood

smoke that our ancestors, tens of thousands of years ago, must have caught on the air when they were coming home with the result of the day's forage, when they were still nomads, and when they were still roaming the forests and the plains of the continent of Europe. These things strike down into the very depths of our nature, and touch chords that go back to the beginning of time and the human race, but they are chords that with every year of our life sound a deeper note in our innermost being..

These are the things that make England, and I grieve for it that they are not the childish inheritance of the majority of the people to-day in our country. They ought to be the inheritance of every child born into this country, but nothing can be more touching than to see how the working man and woman after generations in the towns will have their tiny bit of garden if they can, will go to gardens if they can, to look at something which they have never seen as children, but which our ancestors knew and loved. The love of these things is innate and inherent in our people. It makes for that love of home, one of the strongest features of our race, and it is that that makes our race seek its new home in the dominions overseas, where they have room to see things like this that they can no more see at home. It is that power of making homes almost peculiar to our people, and it is one of the sources of their greatness. They go overseas, and they take with them what they learned at home : love of justice, love of truth, and the broad humanity that are so characteristic of English people. It may well be that these traits on which we pride ourselves, which we hope to show and try to

show in our lives, may survive—survive among our people so long as they are a people—and I hope and believe this, that just as to-day more than fifteen centuries since the last of those great Roman legionaries left England, we still speak of the Roman strength, and the Roman work, and the Roman character, so perhaps in the ten thousandth century, long after the empires of this world as we know them have fallen and others have risen and fallen, and risen and fallen again, the men who are then on this earth may yet speak of those characteristics which we prize as the characteristics of the English, and that long after, maybe, the name of this country has passed away, wherever men are honourable and upright and persevering, lovers of home, of their brethren, of justice and of humanity, the men in the world of that day may say, “We still have among us the gifts of that great English race.”

3. THE GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH NAVY

(From *English Seamen of the Sixteenth Century*)

J. A. FROUDE

JEAN PAUL, the German poet, said that God had given to France the empire of the land, to England the empire of the sea, and to his own country the empire of the air. The world has changed since Jean Paul's days.¹ The wings of France have been clipped ; the German Empire has become a solid thing ; but England still holds her watery dominion ; Britannia does still rule the waves, and in this proud position she has spread the English race over the globe ; she has created the great American nation ; she is peopling new Englands at the Antipodes ; she has made her Queen, Empress of India ; and is in fact the very considerable phenomenon in the social and political world which all acknowledge her to be. And all this she has achieved in the course of three centuries, entirely in consequence of her predominance as an ocean power. Take away her merchant fleets ; take away the navy that guards them : her empire will come to an end ; her colonies will fall off, like leaves from a withered tree ; and Britain will become once more an insignificant island in the North Sea, for the future students in Australian and New Zealand universities to discuss the fate of in their debating societies.

¹ J. A. Froude, 1818-1894.

How the English navy came to hold so extraordinary a position is worth reflecting on. We are shown the power of our country growing and expanding. But how it grew, why, after a sleep of so many hundred years, the genius of our Scandinavian forefathers suddenly sprang again into life—of this we are left without explanation.

The beginning was undoubtedly the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Down to that time the sea sovereignty belonged to the Spaniards, and had been fairly won by them. The subjects of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Charles V and Philip II, were extraordinary men, and accomplished extraordinary things. They stretched the limits of the known world; they conquered Mexico and Peru; they planted their colonies over the South American continent; they took possession of the great West Indian islands. They spread to the Indian Ocean, and gave their monarch's name to the Philippines. All this they accomplished in half a century, and, as it were, they did it with a single hand; with the other they were fighting Moors and Turks and protecting the coast of the Mediterranean from the corsairs of Tunis and Constantinople.

They had risen on the crest of the wave, and with their proud "*Non sufficit orbis*" were looking for new worlds to conquer, at a time when the bark of the English water dogs had scarcely been heard beyond their own fishing grounds, and the largest merchant vessel sailing from the port of London was scarce bigger than a modern coasting collier.

And yet within the space of a single ordinary life these

insignificant islanders had struck the sceptre from the Spaniards' grasp and placed the ocean crown on the brow of their own sovereign. How did it come about?

The English sea power was the legitimate child of the Reformation. It grew, as I shall show you, directly out of the new despised Protestantism. Drake's cannon would not have roared so loudly and so widely without seamen already trained in heart and hand to work his ships and level his artillery. It was to the superior seamanship, the superior quality of English ships and crews, that the Spaniards attributed their defeat. Where did these ships come from? Where and how did these mariners learn their trade? Historians talk enthusiastically of the national spirit of a people rising with a united heart to repel the invader, and so on. But national spirit could not extemporise a fleet or produce trained officers and sailors to match the conquerors of Lepanto.

Henry VIII, on coming to the throne, found England without a fleet, and without a conscious sense of the need of one. A few merchant hulks traded with Bordeaux and Cadiz and Lisbon; hoys and flyboats drifted slowly backwards and forwards between Antwerp and the Thames. A fishing fleet tolerably appointed went annually to Iceland for cod. Local fishermen worked the North Sea and the Channel from Hull to Falmouth. The Chester people went to Kinsale for herrings and mackerel: but that was all—the nation had aspired to no more.

The young king, like a wise man, turned his first attention to the broad ditch, as he called the British Channel, which formed the natural defence of the realm.

The opening of the Atlantic had revolutionised war and seamanship. Long voyages required larger vessels. Henry was the first prince to see the place which gunpowder was going to hold in wars. In his first years he repaired his dockyards, built new ships on improved models, and imported Italians to cast him new types of cannon.

When Elizabeth came to the throne, the whole merchant navy of England engaged in lawful commerce amounted to no more than 50,000 tons. You may see more now passing every day through the Gulf Stream.

Events had to take their course. Seamen were duly provided in other ways, and such as the time required. Privateering suited Elizabeth's convenience, and suited her disposition. She liked daring and adventure. She liked men who would do her work without being paid for it, men whom she could disown when expedient; who would understand her, and would not resent it. She knew her turn was to come when Philip had leisure to deal with her, if she could not secure herself meanwhile. Time was wanted to restore the navy. The privateers were a resource in the interval. They might be called pirates while there was formal peace. The name did not signify. They were really the armed force of the country. When Elizabeth was at war with France about Havre, she took the most noted of them into the service of the crown. Ned Horsey became Sir Edward and Governor of the Isle of Wight; Strangeways, a Red Rover in his way, who had been the terror of the Spaniards, was killed before Rouen; Tremayne fell at Havre, mourned over by

Elizabeth ; and Champernowne, one of the most gallant of the whole of them, was killed afterwards at Coligny's side at Moncontour.

But others took their places : the wild hawks as thick as seagulls flashing over the waves, fair wind or foul, laughing at pursuit, brave, reckless, devoted, the crews the strangest medley : English from the Devonshire and Cornish creeks, Huguenots from Rochelle ; Irish kernes with long skenes, "desperate, unruly persons with no kind of mercy."

The Holy Office meanwhile went on in cold, savage resolution : the Holy Office which had begun the business and was the cause of it.

A note in Cecil's hand says that in the one year 1562 twenty-six English subjects had been burned at the stake in different parts of Spain. Ten times as many were starving in Spanish dungeons, from which occasionally, by happy accident, a cry could be heard.

The innocent blood of these poor victims had not to wait to be avenged at the Judgment Day. The account was presented shortly and promptly at the cannon's mouth.

4. THE MESSAGE OF MODERN ASTRONOMY

(From *The Universe Around Us*)

SIR JAMES JEANS

WE are dependent on the light and heat of the sun, and these cannot remain for ever as they now are. So far as we can at present see, solar conditions can hardly have changed much since the earth was born; the earth's 20,000 million years form so small a fraction of the sun's whole life that we can almost suppose the sun to have stood still throughout it. This of itself suggests that, in so far as astronomical factors are concerned, life may look to a tenancy of the earth of far longer duration than the total past age of the earth. . . .

Let us try to see these times in their proper proportion by the help of yet another simple model. Take a postage-stamp, and stick it on to a penny. Now climb Cleopatra's Needle and lay the penny flat, postage-stamp uppermost, on top of the obelisk. The height of the whole structure may be taken to represent the time that has elapsed since the earth was born. On this scale, the thickness of the penny and postage-stamp together represents the time that man has lived on earth. The thickness of the postage-stamp represents the time he has been civilised, the thickness of the penny representing the time he lived in an un-

civilised state. Now stick another postage-stamp on top of the first to represent the next 50,000 years of civilisation and keep sticking on postage-stamps until you have a pile as high as Mont Blanc. Even now the pile forms an inadequate representation of the length of the future, which, so far as astronomy can see, probably stretches before civilised humanity. The first postage-stamp was the past of civilisation; the column higher than Mont Blanc is its future. Or, to look at it in another way, the first postage-stamp represents what man has already achieved; the pile which out-tops Mont Blanc represents what he may achieve, if his future achievement is proportional to his time on earth.

Looked at in terms of space, the message of astronomy is at best one of melancholy grandeur and oppressive vastness. Looked at in terms of time, it becomes one of almost endless possibility and hope. As denizens of the universe we may be living near its end rather than its beginning; for it seems likely that most of the universe had melted into radiation before we appeared on the scene. But as inhabitants of the earth, we are living at the very beginning of time. We have come into being in the fresh glory of the dawn, and a day of almost unthinkable length stretches before us with unimaginable opportunities for accomplishment. Our descendants of far-off ages, looking down this long vista of time from the other end, will see our present age as the misty morning of the world's history; our contemporaries of to-day will appear as dim heroic figures who fought their way through jungles of ignorance, error, and superstition to discover

truth, to learn how to harness the forces of nature, and to make a world worthy for mankind to live in. We are still too much engulfed in the greyness of the morning mists to be able to imagine, however vaguely, how this world of ours will appear to those who will come after us and see it in the full light of day. But by what light we have, we seem to discern that the main message of astronomy is one of hope to the race and of responsibility to the individual—of responsibility because we are drawing plans and laying foundations for a longer future than we can well imagine.

5. "WHEN MY SHIP COMES IN"

FRANK SIDGWICK

WHEN my ship comes in, as it's bound to come,
I'll follow no poet to Innisfree,
For I don't much care for the honey-bee's hum,
And a clay-wattled cabin is not for me :
But I'll bid farewell to the life of a clerk,
And third-floor lodgings in Battersea Park ;
And pack a satchel and oil my bike,
And ride till I find a house I like.

I don't want thorpes, or hangers, or holts,
Or grass by-lanes where a dog-cart jolts :
I am not one of those whose hearts are set
On leasing a " Bijou Maisonnette "—
Suburban horrors—I hate all such ;
I know what I want, and I don't want much :
Only a low two-storeyed home
Of old red brick and old brown wood,
On soil of gravel or good blue loam—
As long as the sanitation's good ;—
A house on the hill-side I'd like best,
With at least one window facing west.
For I think one room in every house
Should see the sun set through the boughs :

Though poets rejoice when the day declines
Athwart the stems of tall dark pines—
No pines for me, where the wind will sough ;¹
An apple orchard is good enough.¹
For in May, when the blossom is white and pink,
Imagine waking at six, to blink
At apple-blossom against blue sky—
Like a Japanese screen—and lazily lie
In a dimity cot, as white as snow!—
What dimity is I don't quite know,
But it sounds all right for a cot, does dimity
Breathing a sense of cosy sublimity.
—To wake, I repeat, in a fragrant room,
To pink-white masses of apple-bloom,
With little bits of the brightest blue
Of a May-morn welkin peeping through ;
Watching the martins dip and pass,
And the thrush with one eye cocked on the grass :—
And to nuzzle under the coverlet
And know that you need not get up yet!
Though sloth on a fine May-morn be sin,
A sinner I'll be when my ship comes in!

My garden, too, will not be abnormal,
Nor yet Italian, and prim and formal :
A garden formed on a proper plan
Shows Nature obeying the Hand of Man,
Nor Artifice flaunting in Nature's dress,
Nor Man subduing the Wilderness.

¹ Pronounce to taste (Poet's note).

So I'll have parterres, and a fountain-jet,
Lavender, roses, and mignonette ;
A wild place under the apple glades ;
With cowslips springing between the blades ;
And honeysuckle and clematis bowers,
And sops-in-wine and gilly-flowers,
And London Pride and Love-lies-bleeding—
And a hireling knave to do the weeding!
And in gloaming time, when nightingales sing,
As soon as my apple-trees allow,
I'll doze in the dusk in a hammock of string,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

One room I'll have that's full of shelves
For nothing but books ; and the books themselves
Shall be of the sort that a man will choose
If he loves that good old word PERUSE :
The kind of book that you open by chance
To browse on the page with a leisurely glance,
Certain of finding something new,
Although you have read it ten times through.
I don't mean books like *Punch* in series,
Or all the volumes of *Notes and Queries* ;
But those wherein, without effort, your eyes
Fall where the favourite passage lies,
Knowing the page and exact position—
It's never the same in another edition!
The *Vicar of Wakefield*, and *Evelina*,
Elia, *The Egoist*, *Emma*, *Catriona*,

Fuller and Malory, Westward Ho!

And the wonderful story of Daniel Defoe,
And Izaak Walton and Gilbert White,
And plays and poetry left and right!
—No glass doors, and no “fumed oak”;—
Plain deal, and fumed by myself with smoke;
Stained, if at all, to a pleasant brown,
With ledges and places for putting books down.
And there I'll sit by a blazing log
With a sweet old briar and glass of grog,
And read my Pickwick, Pendennis, Huck Finn,
Cosily there—when my ship comes in.

And, last, one point I can't forget;
Man was not meant for solitude,
And those I cannot praise who let
“I care not” wait upon “I could”.
So when I can, 'twill be my care
To search the world and find the fair,
The chaste, and inexpensive she—
A “managing” helpmate meet for me,
Who'll help to make the two ends meet,
By darning in a low arm-chair,
That lets the lamplight gently beat
In the good old way, upon her hair . . .

But still I have my way to win;
I wonder how these dreams begin;
So far my ship has not come in!

6A. AT MADAME TUSSAUD'S

J. B. PRIESTLEY

LAST Saturday afternoon I visited Madame Tussaud—and hardly recognised her. My recollections of the old place are of a dingy building, a place with a mournful railway waiting-room atmosphere and not many patrons. The new building is very gay, and, what is more astonishing, it is well patronised. There was a crowd of us last Saturday afternoon, and I for one could only catch a glimpse of the heads of the present Royal Family, so dense was the loyal throng in front of this group. When I first entered the Grand Hall, I saw there, all round the room—two sets of people staring at one another. The only difference was that the set lower down, with their backs towards me, made little movements, turned their heads and nudged one another, whereas the other set kept perfectly still. This first crazy glimpse was easily the best thing the exhibition had to offer me. For when I say that I hardly recognised Madame and that she is now quite gay, I refer only to the actual building and its decorations (though I might also include the five girls in black-and-white who form a rather desperate little orchestra), and not to the exhibits. These are just the same, except that

perhaps the new bright building makes them look all the more curious.

There is something sinister about wax. No wonder wax figures play such a notable part in black magic. It is the ideal medium for the effigies of murderers. The actual craftsmanship in this image-making is very good, but it is given a sinister twist by the evil substance. I have no doubt whatever that M. Tussaud and his assistants have a genuine admiration for the subjects of their art, and believe they are doing honour to them by making these effigies. Nevertheless I could understand a stranger who insisted that there is deadly satire behind this show of figures in the Grand Hall. Here are all our kings and dictators and statesmen and generals and powerful ecclesiastics, and they are terrifying. These are the Baldwins and Winston Churchills and Chamberlains of Moscow. As you creep past these staring rows, you are not surprised we have already had one Great War and several revolutions; indeed, you are astonished that Europe has not been utterly destroyed. There are wrinkles here that could plot the destruction of millions. Even Jack Hobbs looks as if he had put away an umpire or two in his time.

There is a literary corner. "Oo's tha' in the chair?" a little boy in front of me inquired. "That's Tickenss," his mother told him. "We got his bookss atome." I wonder how many visitors will buy the works of the modern authors after seeing their images in that corner. Mr. Bernard Shaw, in a very neat light grey lounge suit, is smiling sardonically. I must confess he looks at home

there. The eyebrows and spectacles of Mr. Kipling are admirable. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle looked faintly ectoplasmic, and Sir Oliver Lodge looked so patriarchal that I felt he would have been happier, science or no science, in one of the earlier historical tableaux in the next room. Hardy gave the impression that the President of the Immortals had won the last trick—by cheating. A horrible lumpy face at the back, bulging out of a curiously unconvincing collar and tie, turned out to be Mr. H. G. Wells. He is described in the catalogue as a “vigorous critic of the existing social order”. This Wells looks as if he did his criticising with an axe. It must be queer to sit at home, a comfortable, pink, and sprightly human being, and know that all the time this other sinister self is standing and staring balefully in the Grand Hall. Suppose it came to visit you in the middle of the night—moving slowly and stiffly across the bedroom to waken you with a touch of its waxen hand?

There were not many people in the Hall of Kings. Evidently the interest in Plantagenets and Tudors is not what it was in the Marylebone Road. The most impressive figure there is Henry VIII, whose head is colossal and straight out of a nightmare. Has papistry been at work here? The Hall of Tableaux upstairs attracted more attention than the kings. The Tussaud view of history is that it is at best a dark business, an affair of dim red lights and fierce bearded faces. Even the most innocent subject was touched with the macabre. The announcement to Queen Victoria of her accession demands almost idyllic treatment; the young girl standing in her dressing

gown, with the Archbishop and Lord Conyngham kneeling before her. But once again the wax has had its own sinister way ; and you would swear that the two men you see there are a couple of potential murderers and that the girl herself is about to stamp her foot and release a trap-door that will swallow them both.

There were plenty of us in the Chamber of Horrors. I visited it once before, years ago, and it did not seem greatly changed when I saw it again the other afternoon. On the whole my sympathies are with the good lady I overheard saying to her husband and his friend : " Look here, don't stay too long down here." What a queer immortality those poor animals and lunatics have arrived at in that dim cellar ! There is a glass case in which some odds and ends, a cigar box, pencils, and so forth, once the property of George Joseph Smith, who drowned his wives in the bath, are treasured. Even one of the very baths is there. If these murderers had souls, if they are now spirits and are allowed to go where they will, then they must flock every Saturday to this Chamber, for when they were not mere brutes they were nearly all men of a vanity so overweening that it left them crazed. Do you imagine that their ghosts are indifferent to this grim glory of the extra sixpence and the special chamber, the numbers and the catalogued description ? Vanity and egoism drove them to commit murder, and when a hand fell on their shoulders and the dock loomed before them, they thought at first they had failed. But no, they had succeeded beyond their dreams. The crowds outside the court, the columns of descriptions and comment, the

photographs—and now, when millions of good men have been forgotten and all their belongings gone to the dustbin, they keep their state, are immortal in the Marylebone Road, where the very fire that melted whole dynasties above left their effigies and relics untouched.

Some people believe that nothing in the world is dumb. Our sticks and stones, they say, confide their experiences to the spirit within us. Everybody—even the densest of us—has felt at some time or other that a certain old house or room had an evil atmosphere. Then what about these assembled relics of murder? Are they still whispering, out of their own agony, to the souls of the curious spectators? I was wondering about this, the other afternoon down there, when suddenly, without any previous warning, there came one loud deep note of a bell—a horrible sound. Everyone jumped about six inches into the air. It was, I suppose, the old Toll Bell from Newgate that had given tongue. I know that for one wild moment I had a vision of the whole beastly place coming to life; the murderers stretching, yawning, fixing their eyes on us, then slowly advancing; the hangmen's ropes twitching and curling; the guillotine rising and falling; the treadmill revolving; while that monstrous bell went tolling, tolling. All that did happen, however, was that the attendant, who was learned in murder—"my books tells me", he always said—began a little lecture tour of the figures. His favourite phrase was "the wily eye". I heard about the "wily eye of Justice 'Awkins" and the "wily eye of the Austrians", and I have no doubt that if I had listened carefully to all that he had to say I could

have made an amusing character out of him. But I did not stay long enough ; I sought the open air ; and though it was only the air of the Marylebone Road at the dusk of a heavy winter day, it really did seem very open indeed, most pleasantly sweet to the nostrils.

6B. INSIDE "BIG BEN"

(From *The Spell of London*)

H. V. MORTON

WE mounted a maze of openwork staircases above the works of the clock, and there I saw Big Ben, the great bell, hanging with four Little Bens around him. Big Ben speaks only once an hour, but the four chimes sing the quarters and the half-hours. Big Ben is a monster. He would, if inverted, make a good public swimming bath. At his side reposes in a threatening attitude a vast hammer that weighs four hundredweights and looks like a battering-ram.

And while I waited to hear him strike five I went up and out to the balcony round that nautical-looking lantern which is always lit at night while the Speaker is in the chair, so that absent M.P.'s may know where their duty lies. . . .

Below lay London, lovelier, I think, than I have ever seen her, with an evening mist, blue and patchy, trailing in slow wreaths over her, settling down over her like a fallen cloud so that Nelson at Charing Cross stood up jet black like a cairn above the mist on a mountain top. And the streets were strings of lit lamps: long avenues of amber mellowness in which there was movement, from which ascended a dull, uniform roar of wheels. The

towers of Westminster Abbey stood with their feet in a thin blue haze.

“Come quickly!” shouted my guide from a platform near the bells.

I ran down and stood leaning over an iron fence, watching the great nest of five bells, as the passenger in a ship leans over the deck rail.

No warning : and then——

Startling, hair-raising sound broke suddenly from the four Little Bens and ran round them again. Before every hour they say :

All through this hour, Lord, be my guide,
And by thy Power, no foot shall slide.

Then they stop to let Big Ben do his gigantic bit. . . .

It seemed that Big Ben gathered himself together to tell London that it was five o'clock. In a flash the great battering-ram drew itself apart from the bell, and——

Bang!

It seemed to me that a howitzer had fired a shell. . . .

Bang!

It seemed to me that Big Ben was striking in my head. . . .

Bang!

It seemed to me that the tower of the Houses of Parliament could not remain erect another minute. . . .

Bang!

It seemed to me that the whole of London must surely be alarmed at this!

Bang!

It seemed to me very beautiful that it was not twelve o'clock!

.

The hammer came to rest against the hard cheek of Big Ben, but the sound went on and on and on up there in the clock tower. It was shattering, unforgettable! I looked down on to London, but no one seemed surprised. . . .

On the way earthwards in the spiral tube I sank into an angry rumble of sound, the echoes of the great noise made when Big Ben keeps one of his many appointments with Eternity.

7. ANGLING

(From *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayton, Gent.*)

WASHINGTON IRVING

It is said that many an unlucky urchin is induced to run away from his family, and betake himself to a seafaring life, from reading the history of Robinson Crusoe ; and I suspect that, in like manner, many of those worthy gentlemen who are given to haunt the sides of pastoral streams with angle rods in hand, may trace the origin of their passion to the seductive pages of honest Izaak Walton. I recollect studying his *Compleat Angler* several years since, in company with a knot of friends in America, and, moreover, that we were all completely bitten with the angling mania. It was early in the year ; but as soon as the weather was auspicious, and spring began to melt into the verge of summer, we took rod in hand and sallied into the country, as stark mad as ever Don Quixote from reading books of chivalry.

One of our party had equalled the Don in the fulness of his equipments, being attired *cap-à-pie* for the enterprise. He wore a broad-skirted fustian coat, perplexed with half a hundred pockets ; a pair of stout shoes, and leather gaiters ; a basket slung on one side for fish ; a patent rod, a landing-net, and a score of other inconveniences only to be found in the true angler's armoury. Thus harnessed for the field, he was as great a matter of stare and wonder-

ment among the country folk, who had never seen a regular angler.

Our first essay was along a mountain brook, among the highlands of the Hudson ; a most unfortunate place for the execution of those piscatory tactics which had been invented along the velvet margins of quiet English rivulets. It was one of those wild streams that lavish, among our romantic solitudes, unheeded beauties, enough to fill the sketch-book of the hunter of the picturesque. Sometimes it would leap down rocky shelves, making small cascades, over which the trees threw their broad balancing sprays, and long nameless weeds hung in fringes from the impending banks, dripping with diamond drops. Sometimes it would brawl and fret along a ravine in the matted shade of a forest, filling it with murmurs ; and, after this termagant career, would steal forth into open day with the most placid demure face imaginable.

How smoothly would this vagrant brook glide, at such times, through some bosom of green meadow-land among the mountains ; where the quiet was only interrupted by the occasional tinkling of a bell from the lazy cattle among the clover, or the sound of a woodcutter's axe from the neighbouring forest.

For my part, I was always a bungler at all kinds of sport that required either patience or adroitness, and had not angled above half an hour before I had completely " satisfied the sentiment ", and convinced myself of the truth of Izaak Walton's opinion, that angling is something like poetry—a man must be born to it. I hooked myself

instead of the fish ; tangled my line in every tree ; lost my bait ; broke my rod ; until I gave up the attempt in despair, and passed the day under the trees, reading old Izaak ; satisfied that it was his fascinating vein of honest simplicity and rural feeling that had bewitched me, and not the passion for angling.

My companions, however, were more persevering in their delusion. I have them at this moment before my eyes, stealing along the border of the brook, where it lay open to the day, or was merely fringed by shrubs and bushes. I see the bittern rising with hollow scream as they break in upon his rarely invaded haunt ; the kingfisher watching them suspiciously from his dry tree that overhangs the deep black mill-pond in the gorge of the hills ; the tortoise letting himself slip sideways from off the stone or log on which he is sunning himself ; and the panic-struck frog plumping in headlong as they approach, and spreading an alarm throughout the watery world around.

I recollect, also, that, after toiling and watching and creeping about for the greater part of the day, with scarcely any success, in spite of all our admirable apparatus, a lubberly country urchin came down from the hills with a rod made from the branch of a tree, a few yards of twine, and, as heaven shall help me ! I believe a crooked pin for a hook, baited with a vile earthworm—and in half an hour caught more fish than we had nibbles throughout the day !

There is certainly something in angling, if we could forget, which anglers are apt to do, the cruelties and tor-

tures inflicted on worms and insects, that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, and a pure serenity of mind. As the English are methodical, even in their recreations, and are the most scientific of sportsmen, it has been reduced among them to perfect rule and system. Indeed, it is an amusement peculiarly adapted to the mild and highly cultivated scenery of England, where every roughness has been softened away from the landscape. It is delightful to saunter along those limpid streams which wander, like veins of silver, through the bosom of this beautiful country; leading one through a diversity of small home scenery; sometimes winding through ornamented grounds; sometimes brimming along through rich pasturage, where the fresh green is mingled with the sweet smelling flowers; sometimes venturing in sight of villages and hamlets, and then running capriciously away into shady retirements. The sweetness and serenity of nature, and the quiet watchfulness of the sport, gradually bring on pleasant fits of musing, which are now and then agreeably interrupted by the song of a bird, the distant whistle of a pheasant, or perhaps, the vagary of some fish, leaping out of the still water, and skimming transiently about its glassy surface. "When I would beget content", says Izaak Walton, "and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other little living creatures that are not only created, but fed (man knows not how) by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in Him."

8. SILENCE

(From *The Money Box*)

ROBERT LYND

SILENCE is unnatural to man. He begins life with a cry and ends it in stillness. In the interval he does all he can to make a noise in the world, and there are few things of which he stands in more fear than of the absence of noise. Even his conversation is in great measure a desperate attempt to prevent a dreadful silence. If he is introduced to a fellow-mortal, and a number of pauses occur in the conversation, he regards himself as a failure, a worthless person, and is full of envy of the emptiest-headed chatter-box. He knows that ninety-nine per cent. of human conversation means no more than the buzzing of a fly, but he longs to join in the buzz, and to prove that he is a man and not a waxwork figure. The object of conversation is not, for the most part, to communicate ideas: it is to keep up the buzzing sound. There are, it must be admitted, different qualities of buzz: there is even a buzz that is as exasperating as the continuous ping of a mosquito. But at a dinner party one would rather be a mosquito than a mute. Most buzzing, fortunately, is agreeable to the ear, and some of it is agreeable even to the mind. He would be a foolish man, however, who waited till he had a wise thought to take part in the buzzing

with his neighbours. Those who despise the weather as a conversational opening seem to me to be ignorant of the reason why human beings wish to talk. Very few human beings join in a conversation in the hope of learning anything new. Some of them are content if they are merely allowed to go on making a noise into other people's ears, though they have nothing to tell them except that they have seen two or three new plays or that they had had bad food in a Swiss hotel. At the end of an evening during which they have said nothing at immense length they justly plume themselves on their success as conversationalists. I have heard a young man holding up the monologue of a prince among modern wits for half an hour in order to tell us absolutely nothing about himself with opulent long-windedness. None of us except the young man himself liked it, but he looked as happy as if he had a crown on his head.

Many of us, indeed, do not enjoy conversation unless it is we ourselves who are making the most conspicuous noise. This, I think, is a vice in conversation, but has its origin in a natural hatred of silence. The young man was so much afraid of silence that he dared not risk being silent about himself lest a universal silence should follow. If he failed as a talker, it was because he did not sufficiently realise that conversation should be not only a buzz but a sympathetic buzz. That is why the weather is so useful a subject. It brings people at once to an experience which is generally shared and enables them, as it were, to buzz on the same note. Having achieved this harmony, they advance by miraculous stages to other sympathies, and, as

note succeeds note, a pleasant and varied little melody of conversation is made, as satisfying to the ear and mind as the music of a humming-top. The discovery of new notes of sympathy is the secret of all good conversation. It is because this is necessary to good conversation that a conversation of a party of three is so often a failure. Two of them discover a note of sympathy, and they begin to buzz on it enthusiastically, forgetful of the fact that it is an occasion not for a double but for a triple buzz. Two of them, perhaps, have been at the same college or university. They go on for an hour happily sharing experiences in sentences like "You remember old Crocker?" "You remember the day he——?" "You remember the night he stole the policeman's helmet?" "But the funniest thing of all was the day he threw the bowl of tulips out of the window and nearly brained old —— (naming a famous professor of Greek)." Reminiscences are the best conversation in the world for two; they warm the heart and excite the brain like wine. But the third man is all the more conscious of being out in the cold, because these names and events, which are a sort of algebraic symbols of the emotions to them, are to him meaningless. He does not know who "old Towser" was, or who "old Billy Tubbs", or who "Old Snorter Richardson". He smiles mechanically as the others laugh with dreamier and dreamier eyes over incidents that convey all the fun of youth to them but that to him seem mere inanities of the memory. A conversation of this kind is bad indeed, because it condemns the third man to the torture of compulsory silence. You may have an

excellent conversation of three where one man is voluntarily silent, but you cannot have a good conversation where one of the three is necessarily silent.

It is not only in social life, however, that we dread silence. We love noise more than we know, even when no other human being is present. When we go from town to live in the country we deceive ourselves if we think we are doing so in order to exchange noise for quietness. We go into the country, not in order to escape from noise, but in search of a different kind of noise. Sit in a country garden in May, and you will notice that the noise is continuous. The birds are loquacious as women: the bees as inimical to silence as children. Cocks crow, hens cackle, dogs bark, sheep baa, cart wheels crunch, and the whole day passes in a succession of sounds which would drive us to distraction if we were really devotees of silence. When evening falls, and the voice of the last cuckoo fades into universal silence, we are aware of a new awe as of something supernatural. The fear of the dark is largely a fear of silence. It is difficult to believe that the world is entirely uninhabited, and, if it is not filled with the noises of men and animals, we begin—at least, a good many of us do—to suspect the silent presence of something unseen and terrible. Noise is companionship, and I remember that I, as a child, liked even the ticking of a clock in the bedroom. How good it was, too, to open the bedroom window and hear the pleasant prose of a corncrake coming through the meadows through the darkness! There are sounds that are terrifying at night, but they are chiefly so because of the stillness that is

broken by them. The breathing of a cow behind a hedge, as you pass along a silent road at midnight, may startle you, but it is not the cow, it is the silence, that has startled you. If nature, indeed, could contrive to maintain all her busy sounds through the night, darkness would lose more than half its terrors.

For complete silence produces feelings of awe in us even in the full blaze of day. If you could imagine yourself the last living thing on earth but the plants, and if you knew that you were immortal and secure from danger for ever, what horror you would feel of a world in which there was no sound but the sound of your own feet or of your own voice if you had the heart to use it! If there were birds and dogs and cats and cows and sheep, you might endure your solitude with philosophy. I should not care for it myself even then, but I should suffer less than if I were the last living creature on a silent globe, on which a motionless sea never broke the stillness of any shore. We speak of the silence of the grave, and without noise the world would be no better than a grave. To survive alone upon its lifeless surface would be to be buried alive, and most of us, if we were given the choice, would commit suicide in order to escape from it. This is not to say that we never enjoy the awfulness of silence. Travellers in the mountains and among the snows, discoverers of dead and deserted cities, can thrill us with their descriptions of the profound stillness of the scenes, as though to penetrate into such silence were to step into a new world. Silence such as this keys us up to unaccustomed excitements and susceptibilities. London

seen from Westminster Bridge in the silence of dawn moved Wordsworth with a majesty unknown in the busy clamour of noon. In silence we seem to approach the border of some mysterious reality that has escaped us in the din of common life. Hence it is that, if we go into a cathedral, we are offended by those who bring into it noise and restlessness. The cathedral moves us most deeply in perfect stillness. It is no mere superstition that bids us be silent or, if we must speak, lower our voices to a whisper. We cannot even see the cathedral so that its beauty passes into the imagination and the memory save in perfect silence.

Certain religious bodies have recognised the value of silence, and mystics have told us that it is through silence rather than speech that we arrive at a knowledge of the secret of life. Certainly, the increase in the noisiness of mankind does not seem to lead to any great increase in wisdom. Cynics are doubtful whether any useful end is served by the ceremony of the 'Two Minutes' Silence that has now become an annual event in England and some other countries on Armistice Day ; but having been in a London street, when all the traffic died down into perfect stillness, and every human being in sight stood motionless as a stone in a silent world, I, like a million others, have felt the spell of the transformation. London of the bus and dray and warehouse seemed to be touched with a mystery and strangeness that meant more to the imagination than the hooting of horns and the hurry of trampling feet. One aged man, indeed, did advance through the death-like stillness of the figures of his fellow creatures—

an aged man in a faded bowler and with a pipe in his mouth. I do not know whether he even noticed that the men and women had suddenly become statues and that the traffic of the streets was as still as the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty. There was no sound on earth for a time but the whisper and squeaking of the old man's boots becoming less and less as it disappeared into the distance. Instead of breaking the silence, it seemed to intensify it. And no one even turned a head to look after him. Perhaps he had never heard of Armistice Day. Perhaps—lucky man—he had never heard even of the war. But how typical he was of his kind in his incapacity for remaining still! The rest of us, it is true, can succeed in remaining silent for two minutes. But, at the sound of the gun, with what a cheerful tumult we rush back again into the clamour of ordinary life!

9. WALKING

(From *Clio, A Muse*)

G. M. TREVELYAN

THE secret beauties of nature are unveiled only to the cross-country walker. On the road we never meet the "moving accidents by flood and field": the sudden glory of a woodland glade; the open back-door of the old farmhouse sequestered deep in rural solitude; the cow routed up from meditation behind the stone wall as we scale it suddenly; the deep, slow, south-country stream that we must jump, or wander along to find the bridge; the autumnal dew on the bracken and the blue straight smoke of the cottage in the still glen at dawn; the rush down the mountain-side, hair flying, stones and grouse rising at our feet; and at the bottom the plunge in the pool below the waterfall, in a place so fair that kings should come from far to bathe therein—yet is it left, year in and year out, unvisited save by us and "troops of stars". These, and a thousand other blessed chances of the day, are the heart of Walking, and these are not of the road.

Yet the hard road plays a part in every good walk, generally at the beginning and at the end. Nor must we forget the "soft" road, mediating as it were between his hard artificial brother and wild surrounding nature. The broad grass lanes of the low country, relics of mediæval

wayfaring; the green, unfenced moorland road; the derelict road already half gone back to pasture; the common farm track—these and all their kind are a blessing to the walker, to be diligently sought out by help of map and used as long as may be. For they unite the speed and smooth surface of the harder road with much at least of the softness to the foot, the romance and the beauty of cross-country routes.

It is well to seek as much variety as is possible. Road and track, field and wood, mountain, hill and plain should follow each other in shifting vision. Some kinds of country are in themselves a combination of different delights, as for example the sub-Lake district, which walkers often see in Pisgah view from Bowfell or the Old Man, but too seldom traverse. It is a land sounding with streams from the higher mountains, itself composed of little hills and tiny plains covered half by hazel woods and heather moors, half by pasture and cornfields; and in the middle of the fields rise lesser islands of rocks and patches of the northern jungle still uncleared. The districts along the foot of mountain ranges are often the most varied in feature, and therefore the best for walking.

Variety, too, can be obtained by losing your way. There is a joyous mystery in roaming on, reckless where you are, into what valley, road or farm, chance and the hour are guiding you. If the place is lonely and beautiful, and if you have lost all count of it upon the map, it may seem a fairy glen, a lost piece of old England that no surveyor would find though he searched for it a year. I scarcely know whether most to value this quality of

aloofness and magic in country I have never seen before, and may never see again, or the familiar joys of Walking grounds where every tree and rock are rooted in the memories that make up my life.

10. THE FAIR

(From *The Times*—Third Leaders)

To some it may seem all wrong that the raucous and gaudy creation which monopolises so many otherwise peaceful corners of our summer countryside should be called a "fair". According to the general trend of things we ought to be lamenting the true fair's disusage—the passing of something joyously and completely representative of a country life which should by rights have gone. To be in the fashion we ought to be saying that country fairs "are not what they were"; that "Merrie England" is no longer its old self; that serving-wenchs no longer stand with their mops ready for the hiring, or smocked carters in a smiling row with their whips and ribbons; and that Autolycus might be hard put to it in these days to make merchandise of that immortal fish's ballad "against the hard hearts of maids". Heyday, for the old simplicities!

And yet how very far from dead is the fair, even for buying and selling. What is this lowing of cattle and bleating of sheep which greets the ears of any sojourner in any self-respecting country town on the right day of the week? Who are these apple-cheeked country notables about the market-place? They have arrived by cars, possibly, in place of the old gigs; but they are still there for the fair. Looking through the almanac one finds that

in England alone some five hundred country towns, whose names are five hundred sweet symphonies, continue to "proclaim" their regular days for the fair. It is astonishing, too, how many of them are particular about celebrating their favourite saint after this fashion, taking knowledge of his or her festival's date for granted. They hold unchanged, since the time of those mediæval charters, the faith of the fair. But more remarkable than all is the fact that from the point of view of amusement—and what else should "fair" mean but holiday?—the tale is one of growth rather than decline. These modern roundabouts, swing-boats, switchbacks, and bewildering machines for every sort of discomforture—they have developed out of all comparison with the means of rural mirth available even to the passing generation in its uncritical youth.

Any idea, for instance, that the roundabout, as we know it, is a survival of the primitive would seem to need correction. Unless the "tournament"—a device of Charles II's day for the serious teaching of horsemanship—be accounted a forerunner, it must be within very little more than a century that a turning see-saw propelled by the feet took to itself an umbrella top and a donkey, and became prototype to the common but splendid object of the present fair-ground. With a speed which beguiles memory the fair has advanced during recent years in popularity as well as in the design of its appurtenances. It has been the making of fortunes. It has achieved representation in the House of Commons.

Those who resent this modern fair as a wild amalgam of tawdry colour and strident sound, horseplay and

hazard, must remember that just the same characteristics have been deplored in the fairs of all ages. In spite of everything, a reassuring appetite for rough-and-tumble fun and a demand for bright colour and gay music by the rural population have always testified to the native vigour of our race. Though John Bunyan and Dr. Primrose might still find cause for regret, it is difficult not to feel that Mr. Justice Slender, in his careless days, with Will Squele, the “Cotswold man”, or “Old Double”, who could “clap i’ the clout at four score”, would have found plenty of good sport in the coconut shy, and Christopher Sly and John Naps of Greece just as full pleasure as their successors in those physical shakes and jerks over which so much ingenuity has been expended of late. Even from the point of view of art there is much to be said for the fair, intentionally garish though it be. Its ingredients have been evolved by the country’s needs. To look at a modern fair without a background is to believe it incapable of seeming anything else anywhere but a sin against every aesthetic canon. Yet, in its proper surroundings, flaunting itself upon the greensward beneath towering trees, the noise drowned in silent distances, it seems to fit into its place like some huge flower. So much primary colour can England’s green landscape absorb.

II. AUTUMN

ROGER WRAY

SPRING is a serenade, but autumn is a nocturne. In the waning of the year, the world is full of sombre solemnity and a pathetic sense of old age. I have gleaned this information by reading poems on the subject.

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown
and sere.

So begins the dirge of William Cullen Bryant.

Yes, the year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared.

This is from Longfellow, and the poet proceeds to compare autumn to the insane old King Lear. Wordsworth speaks of the "pensive" beauty of autumn, but to Shelley—

The year
On the earth, her deathbed, in a shroud of leaves dead
Is lying.

And Hood's admirable little poem ends :

But here the autumn melancholy dwells,
And sighs her tearful spells,
Among the sunless shadows of the plain.

All of which is most impressive ; and reading it to an accompaniment of minor music, rendered by wind-demons in the keyhole, it convinced me absolutely. Accordingly, when I went a long ramble through the countryside this morning I was fully prepared to observe the sad tokens of Nature's senility and decay.

But a glorious surprise met me at the outset, and changed my mood from lamentation to exultation. I passed from the dismal poetic fiction to the actual glowing fact ; from mournful reverie to mighty revelry. And all the predictions of the gloomy poets were scattered like the autumn leaves. For who can look at the blaze of autumn colours and declare them solemn? Who can drink deep draughts of the autumn gales and talk about senility?

Autumn is youthful, mirthful, frolicsome—the child of summer's joy—and on every side there are suggestions of juvenility and mischief. While spring is a careful artist who paints each flower with delicate workmanship, autumn flings whole pots of paint about in wildest carelessness. The crimson and scarlet colours reserved for roses and tulips are splashed on the brambles till every bush is aflame, and the old creeper-covered house blushes like a sunset.

The violet paint is smeared grotesquely on the riotous foliage ; the daffodil and crocus dyes are emptied over limes and chestnuts. Our eyes surfeit themselves on the gorgeous feast of colours—purple, mauve, vermillion, saffron, russet, silver, copper, bronze and old gold. The leaves are dipped and soaked in fiery hues, and the mis-

chievous "artist" will never rest till he has used up every drop. Yet Shelley gazed at the pantomime-woods and declared (amid all the pomp and pageantry) that the year was on her deathbed, and this was her shroud!

Why do the poets feel that autumn is ancient? He romps over the earth, chasing the puppy-like gales, making them scamper over the mirrored pools, and ruffling their surface till the water-reeds hiss him away. He revels in boisterous gaiety, playing pranks like a school-boy on the first day of his holidays. He turns on the rain-taps to try the effect; he daubs a few toadstools blood-red; he switches on summer sunshine for an hour, and then lets loose a tempest. He torments the stately trees, tears their foliage off in handfuls, rocks them backwards and forwards till they groan, and then scampers away for a brief interval leaving heavenly peace behind him. The fallen leaves are set racing down the lane.

With madcap destructiveness he wastes his own handiwork, stripping the finery from the woods and forests. The bare trees sigh and shiver, but he mocks them with howls and caterwaulings. Then he sets the bracken afire and pauses to admire the October tints. Finally, with deceptive golden sunshine, he tempts the sage out of doors, suddenly drenches him, and drives him home saturated to the skin. The sage thereon changes his raiment, and murmurs about the solemnity of the dying year and the pensive beauties of autumn.

The whole spirit of autumn is frolicsome and changeful as that of an eager child. The "solemn tints" are the grotesque hues of the harlequin, and the "mournful

winds " are suggestive of young giants playing leapfrog over the tree-tops. The lengthening period of darkness is a reminder of the long sleep of a healthy child, and when the sun awakes each autumn morning he rubs his misty eyes and wonders what antics he will see before bed-time.

Spring is a lovely maiden ; Summer a radiant bride ; but Autumn is a tomboy whose occasional quietness is more alarming than his noisiest escapades.

12. THE TOWN WEEK

(From *Fireside and Sunshine*).

E. V. LUCAS

It is odd that "Mondayish" is the only word which the days of the week have given us ; since Monday is not alone in possessing a positive and peculiar character. Why not "Tuesdayish" or "Wednesdayish"? Each word would convey as much meaning to me, "Tuesdayish" in particular, for Monday's cardinal and reprehensible error of beginning the business week seems to me almost a virtue compared with Tuesday's utter flatness. To begin a new week is no fault at all, though tradition has branded it as one. To begin is a noble accomplishment ; but to continue dully, to be the tame follower of a courageous beginner, to be the second day in a week of action, as in Tuesday's case—that is deplorable, if you like.

Monday can be flat enough, but in a different way from Tuesday. Monday is flat because one has been idling, perhaps unconsciously absorbing notions of living like the lilies ; because so many days pass before the week-ends ; because yesterday is no more. But Tuesday has the sheer essential flatness of nonentity ; Tuesday is nothing. If you would know how absolutely nothing it is, go to a week-end hotel at, say Brighton, and stay on

after Saturday-to-Monday population has flitted. On Tuesday you touch the depths. So does the menu—no chef ever exerted himself for a Tuesday guest. Tuesday is also very difficult to spell, many otherwise cultured ladies putting the *e* before the *u*; and why not? What right has Tuesday to any preference?

With all its faults, Monday has a positive character. Monday brings a feeling of revolt; Tuesday, the base craven, reconciles us to the machine. I am not surprised that the recent American revivalists held no meetings on Mondays. It was a mark of their astuteness; they knew that the wear and tear of overcoming the Monday feeling of the greater part of their audience would exhaust them before their magnetism began to have play; while a similarly stubborn difficulty would confront them in the remaining portion sunk in apathy by the thought that to-morrow would be Tuesday. It is this presage of certain tedium which has robbed Monday evening of its "glittering star". Yet since nothing so becomes a flat day as the death of it, Tuesday evening's glittering star (it is Wordsworth's phrase) is of the brightest—for is not the dreary day nearly done, and is not to-morrow Wednesday the bland?

With Wednesday, the week stirs itself, turns over, begins to wake. There are matinées on Wednesday; on Wednesdays some of the more genial weekly papers come out. The very word has a good honest round air—Wednesday. Things, adventures, might happen very naturally on Wednesday; but that nothing ever happened of a Tuesday I am convinced. In summer Wednesday

has often close finishes at Lord's, and it is a day on which one's friends are pretty sure to be accessible. On Monday they may not have returned from the country; on Friday they have begun to go out of town again; but on Wednesday they are here, at home—are solid. I am sure it is my favourite day.

(Even politicians, so slow as a rule to recognise the kindlier, more generous, side of life, realised for many years that Wednesday was a day on which they had no right to conduct their business for more than an hour or so. Much of the failure of the last Government may be traced to their atheistical decision no longer to remember Wednesday to keep it holy.)

On Thursday the week falls back a little; the stirring of Wednesday is forgotten; there is a return to the folding of hands. I am not sure that Thursday has not become a real day of rest. That it is a good honest day is the most that can be said for it. It is certainly not the Thor's day any longer—if my reading of the character of the blacksmith-god is true. There is nothing strong and downright and fine about it. Compared with Tuesday's small beer, Thursday is almost champagne; but none the less they are related. One can group them together. If I were a business man, I should, I am certain, sell my shares at a loss on Monday and at a profit on Wednesday and Friday, but on Tuesday and Thursday I should get for them exactly what I gave.

I group Friday with Wednesday as a day that can be friendly to me, but it has not Wednesday's quality. Wednesday is calm, assured, urbane; Friday allows

itself to be a little flurried and excited. Wednesday stands alone ; Friday is too busy. Too many papers come out, too many bags are packed, on Friday. But herein, of course, is some of its virtue ; it is the beginning of the end, the forerunner of Saturday and Sunday. If anticipation, as the moralists say, is better than the realisation, Friday is perhaps the best day of the week, for one spends much of it in thinking of the morrow and what good it should bring forth. Friday's greatest merit is perhaps that it paves the way to Saturday and the cessation of work. That it ever was really unlucky I greatly doubt.

And so we come to Saturday and Sunday. But here the analyst falters, for Saturday and Sunday pass from the region of definable days. Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and Friday, these are days with a character fixed more or less for all. But Saturday and Sunday are what we individually make of them. In one family they are friends, associates ; in another as ill-assorted as Socrates and Xantippe. For most of us Saturday is not exactly a day at all, it is a collection of hours, part work, part pleasure, and all restlessness. It is a day that we plan for, and therefore it is often a failure. I have no distinct and unvarying impression of Saturday except that trains are full and late, and shops shut too early.

Sunday even more than Saturday is different as people are different. To the godly it is a day of low tones, its minutes go by muffled ; to the children of the godly it is eternity. To the ungodly it is a day jeopardised by an interest in barometers that is almost too poignant. To one man it is an interruption of the week ; to another it

is the week itself, and all the rest of the days are but preparations for it. One cannot analyse Saturday and Sunday.

But Monday? There we are on solid ground again. Monday—but I have discussed Monday already : that is one of its principal characteristics, that it is always coming round again, pretending to be new. It is always the same in reality.

13. LONDON INCONSEQUENCES

(From *All Things Considered*)

G. K. CHESTERTON

A LITTLE while ago I fell out of England into the town of Paris. If a man fell out of the moon into the town of Paris he would know that it was the capital of a great nation. If, however, he fell (perhaps off some other side of the moon) so as to hit the city of London, he would not know so well that it was the capital of a great nation ; at any rate, he would not know that the nation was so great as it is. This would be so even on the assumption that the man from the moon could not read our alphabet, as presumably he could not, unless elementary education in that planet has gone to rather unsuspected lengths. But it is true that a great part of the distinctive quality which separates Paris from London may be even seen in the names. Real democrats always insist that England is an aristocratic country. Real aristocrats always insist (for some mysterious reason) that it is a democratic country. But if any one has any real doubt about the matter, let him consider simply the names of the streets. Nearly all the streets out of the Strand, for instance, are named after the first name, second name, third name, fourth, fifth, and sixth names of some particular noble family ; after their relations, connections, or places of residence—Arundel

Street, Norfolk Street, Villiers Street, Bedford Street, Southampton Street, and any number of others. The names are varied, so as to introduce the same family under all sorts of different surnames. Thus we have Arundel Street and also Norfolk Street; thus we have Buckingham Street and also Villiers Street. To say that this is not aristocracy is simply intellectual impudence. I am an ordinary citizen, and my name is Gilbert Keith Chesterton; and I confess that if I found three streets in a row in the Strand, the first called Gilbert Street, the second Keith Street, and the third Chesterton Street, I should consider that I had become a somewhat more important person in the commonwealth than was altogether good for its health. If Frenchmen ran London (which God forbid!), they would think it quite as ludicrous that those streets should be named after the Duke of Buckingham as that they should be named after me. They are streets out of one of the main thoroughfares of London. If French methods were adopted, one of them would be called Shakespeare Street, another Cromwell Street, another Wordsworth Street; there would be statues of each of these persons at the end of each of these streets, and any streets left over would be named after the date on which the Reform Bill was passed or the Penny Postage established.

Suppose a man tried to find people in London by the names of the places. It would make a fine farce, illustrating our illogicality. Our hero, having once realised that Buckingham Street was named after the Buckingham family, would naturally walk into Buckingham Palace in

search for the Duke of Buckingham. To his astonishment he would meet somebody quite different. His simple lunar logic would lead him to suppose that if he wanted the Duke of Marlborough (which seems unlikely) he would find him at Marlborough House. He would find the Prince of Wales. When at last he understood that the Marlboroughs live at Blenheim, named after the great Marlborough's victory, he would, no doubt, go there. But he would again find himself in error if, acting upon this principle, he tried to find the Duke of Wellington, and told the cabman to drive to Waterloo. I wonder that no one has written a wild romance about the adventures of such an alien, seeking the great English aristocrats, and only guided by the names ; looking for the Duke of Bedford in the town of that name, seeking some trace of the Duke of Norfolk in Norfolk. He might sail for Wellington in New Zealand to find the ancient seat of the Wellingtons. The last scene might show him trying to learn Welsh in order to converse with the Prince of Wales.

But even if the imaginary traveller knew no alphabet of this earth at all, I think it would still be possible to suppose him seeing a difference between London and Paris, and, upon the whole, the real difference. He would not be able to read the words "Quai Voltaire" ; but he would see the sneering statue and the hard, straight roads ; without having heard of Voltaire he would understand that the city was Voltairean. He would not know that Fleet Street was named after the Fleet Prison. But the same national spirit which kept the Fleet Prison closed

and narrow still keeps Fleet Street closed and narrow. Or, if you will, you may call Fleet Street cosy, and the Fleet Prison cosy. I think I could be more comfortable in the Fleet Prison, in an English way of comfort, than just under the statue of Voltaire. I think that the man from the moon would know France without knowing French ; I think that he would know England without having heard the word. For in the last resort all men talk by signs. To talk by statues is to talk by signs ; to talk by cities is to talk by signs. Pillars, palaces, cathedrals, temples, pyramids, are an enormous dumb alphabet : as if some giant held up his fingers of stone. The most important things at the last are always said by signs, even if, like the Cross on St. Paul's, they are signs in heaven. If men do not understand signs, they will never understand words.

14. THE WORLD OF TO-MORROW

(From *Science and the Modern World*)

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

THE differences between the nations and races of mankind are required to preserve the conditions under which higher development is possible. One main factor in the upward trend of animal life has been the power of wandering. Perhaps this is why the armour-plated monsters fared badly. They could not wander. Animals wander into new conditions. They have to adapt themselves or die. Mankind has wandered from the trees to the plains, from the plains to the sea-coast, from climate to climate, from continent to continent, and from habit of life to habit of life. When man ceases to wander, he will cease to ascend in the scale of being. Physical wandering is still important, but greater still is the power of man's spiritual adventure — adventures of thought, adventures of passionate feeling, adventures of aesthetic experience. A diversification among human communities is essential for the provision of the incentive and material for the Odyssey of the human spirit. Other nations, of different habits, are not enemies ; they are godsend. Men require of their neighbours something sufficiently akin to be understood, something sufficiently different to provoke attention, and something great enough to command

admiration. We must not expect, however, all the virtues. We should even be satisfied if there is something odd enough to be interesting.

Modern science has imposed on humanity the necessity for wandering. Its progressive thought and its progressive technology make the transition through time, from generation to generation, a true migration into uncharted seas of adventure. The very benefit of wandering is that it is dangerous and needs skill to avert evils. We must expect, therefore, that the future will disclose dangers. It is the business of the future to be dangerous ; and it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties.

The prosperous middle classes, who ruled the nineteenth century, placed an excessive value upon placidity of existence. They refused to face the necessities for intellectual reform imposed by the new knowledge. The middle class pessimism over the future of the world comes from a confusion between civilisation and security. In the immediate future there will be less security than in the immediate past, less stability. It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilisation. But, on the whole, the great ages have been unstable ages.

The moral of the tale (of the influence on thought of modern science) is the power of reason, its decisive influence on the life of humanity. The great conquerors, from Alexander to Cæsar, and from Cæsar to Napoleon, influenced profoundly the lives of subsequent generations. But the total effect of this influence shrinks to insigni-

ficance, if compared to the entire transformation of human habits and human mentality produced by the long line of men of thought from Thales to the present day, men individually powerless, but ultimately the rulers of the world.

15. FIRES

(From *More English Essays*)

E. V. LUCAS

A FRIEND of mine making a list of the things needed for the cottage that he had taken, put at the head "bellows". Then he thought for some minutes and was found merely to have added "tongs" and "poker". Then he asked someone to finish it. A fire, indeed, furnishes. Nothing else, not even a chair, is absolutely necessary; and it is difficult for a fire to be too large. Some of the grates put into modern houses by the jerry-builders would move an Elizabethan to tears, so petty and mean are they, and so incapable of radiation. We English people would suffer no loss in kindliness and tolerance were the ingle-nook restored to our homes. The ingle humanises.

Although the father of the family no longer, as in ancient Greece, performs on the hearth religious rites, yet it is still a sacred spot. Lovers whisper there, and there friends exchange confidences. Husband and wife face the fire hand in hand. The table is for wit and good humour, the hearth is for something deeper and more personal. The wisest counsels are offered beside the fire, the most loving sympathy and comprehension are there made explicit. It is the scene of the best dual companionship. The fire itself is a friend, having the prime attribute—

warmth. One of the most human passages of that most human poem, *The Deserted Village*, tells how the wanderer was now and again taken by the memory of the hearth of his distant home :

I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down . . .
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw. . . .

Only by the fireside could a man so unbosom himself. A good fire extracts one's best ; it will not be resisted.

The hearth also is for ghost-stories ; indeed, a ghost story demands a fire. If England were warmed wholly by hot-water pipes or gas-stoves, the Society for Psychical Research would be dissolved. Gas-stoves are poor comforters. They heat the room, it is true, but they do so after a manner of their own, and there they stop. For encouragement, for inspiration, you seek the gas-stove in vain. Who could be witty, who could be humane, before a gas-stove? It does so little for the eye and nothing for the imagination ; its flame is so artificial and restricted a thing, its glowing heart so shallow and ungenerous. It has no voice, no personality, no surprises ; it submits to the control of the gas company, which, in its turn, is controlled by Parliament. Now a fire proper has nothing to do with Parliament. A fire proper has whims, ambitions, and impulses unknown to gas-stoves, undreamed of by asbestos. Yet even the gas-stove has advantages and merits when compared with hot water pipes. The gas-stove at least offers a focus for the eye, unworthy

though it be ; and you can make a semicircle of good people before it. But with hot-water pipes not even that is possible. From the security of ambush they merely heat, and heat whose source is invisible is hardly to be coveted at all. Moreover, the heat of hot-water pipes is but one removed from stuffiness.

Coals are a perpetual surprise, for no two consignments burn exactly alike. There is one variety that does not burn—it explodes. This kind comes mainly from the slate-quarries, and, we must believe, reaches the coal merchant by accident. Few accidents, however, occur so frequently. Another variety, found in its greatest perfection in railway waiting-rooms, does everything but emit heat. A third variety jumps and burns the hearth-rug. One can predicate nothing definite concerning a new load of coal at any time, least of all if the consignment was ordered to be “ exactly like the last ”.

A true luxury is a fire in the bedroom. This is fire at its most fanciful and mysterious. One lies in bed watching drowsily the play of the flames, the flicker of the shadows. The light leaps up and hides again, the room gradually becomes peopled with fantasies. Now and then a coal drops and accentuates the silence. Movement with silence is one of the curious influences that come to us : hence, perhaps, part of the fascination of the cinematoscope, wherein trains rush into stations, and streets are seen filled with hurrying people and bustling vehicles, and yet there is no sound save the clicking of the mechanism. With a fire in one’s bedroom sleep comes wittingly.

Another luxury is reading by firelight, but this is less to the credit of the fire than the book. An author must have us in no uncertain grip when he can induce us to read him by a light so impermanent as that of the elfish coal. Nearer and nearer to the page grows the bended head, and nearer and nearer to the fire moves the book. Boys and girls love to read lying full length on the hearthrug.

Some people maintain a fire from January to December ; and, indeed, the days on which a ruddy grate offends are very few. According to Mortimer Collins, out of the three hundred and sixty-five days that make up the year, only on the odd five is a fire quite dispensable. A perennial fire, is, perhaps, luxury writ large. The very fact that sunbeams falling on the coals dispirit them to grey-ness and ineffectual pallor seems to prove that when the sun rides high it is time to have done with fuel except in the kitchen or in the open air.

The fire in the open air is indeed joy perpetual, and there is no surer way of renewing one's youth than by kindling and tending it, whether it be a rubbish fire for potatoes, or an aromatic offering of pine spindles and fir cones, or the scientific structure of the gipsy to heat a tripod-swung kettle. The gipsy's fire is a work of art. "Two short sticks were stuck in the ground, and a third across to them like a triangle. Against this frame a number of the smallest and driest sticks were leaned, so that they made a tiny hut. Outside these there was a second layer of longer sticks, all standing, or rather leaning, against the first. If a stick is placed across,

lying horizontally, supposing it catches fire, it just burns through the middle and that is all, the ends go out. If it is stood nearly upright, the flame draws up to it ; it is certain to catch, burns longer, and leaves a good ember ". So wrote one who knew—Richard Jefferies, in *Bevis*, that epic of boyhood. Having built the fire, the next thing is to light it. An old gipsy woman can light a fire in a gale, just as a sailor can always light his pipe, even in the cave of " *Æolus* ", but the amateur is less dexterous. The smoke of the open-air fire is charged with memory. One whiff of it, and for a swift moment we are in sympathy with our remotest ancestors, and all that is elemental and primitive in us is awakened.

16. DIARIES

WILLIAM RALPH INGE

THE motives for writing biographies are various. Sometimes, as we have seen recently, the writer is tempted by a big cheque; in other cases he or she is conscious of having had an interesting life, and wishes the public to share the interest. Some men—especially Deans, I regret to say—are raconteurs, and so fond of their own stories that they do not like to think that they may perish with them. The relief of the raconteur's family when the fifty-times-told tale is at last fixed in black and white, and presumably done with, must be immense.

Others have a grievance, and wish posterity to know why they were elbowed out of office, who was really responsible for the miscarriage of a military expedition, who was the real author of a literary or scientific discovery and so on. Classical scholars have admired the dignity of Thucydides in not giving his own story of the reverse at Amphipolis, where he was commander.

Others again have left their memoirs which they intended or hoped would be published after their deaths, and in which they have inserted as much venom as they knew how, conscious that they themselves will not be able to be called to account, nor perhaps their victims to

vindicate their reputation. I have no doubt that Creevey was one of these malicious diarists ; there is evidence that he thought his papers " would be of great value " hereafter. Some of the worst parts of his journal have not been printed, and perhaps never will be. Mark Pattison's memoirs were clearly intended to take a posthumous revenge upon the college which passed him over, very improperly it must be said, for the headship, and on certain people in the University of Oxford whom he disliked.

Sometimes the autobiography seems to be prompted by sheer vanity. Vanity, unlike pride, is a rather amiable foible ; a vain man is seldom unpopular, partly because he shows that he cares for the good opinion of others. But the vain man is essentially an actor. If he is not posing for others, he struts and smirks to gratify himself. As an autobiographer he partially fails by telling too many lies. As Napoleon said of one of his colleagues, " He lies too much. It is well to lie sometimes ; mais toujours, c'est trop."

It is impossible, for example, to know when Benvenuto Cellini is telling the truth. Did he really plant that knife so neatly in the nape of his enemy's neck? Did another enemy really try to poison him with a powdered diamond, and did Benvenuto only escape because the hired murderer, not being a conscientious man, pocketed the diamond and gave Cellini powdered glass instead? We shall never know. Cellini is a most amusing fellow, anyhow. It is good fun to have (vicariously, of course) an occasional complete holiday from all the Ten Commandments.

Religious meditations are another class of autobiography. One may hesitate whether to give the palm to Marcus Aurelius or to St. Augustine. The supreme merit of the Stoic Emperor's little book is that it was written, as he says, "to himself". It was not intended for any other eyes. This gives it a supreme sincerity which all can recognise ; and so important is bare sincerity in the spiritual life that his meditations are still read eagerly by all classes, in all faiths, and in all countries.

Augustine's *Confessions* is a great book, but it was written for publication, long after the events which it describes. If we check it by the short, seldom read dialogues written at the time of his conversion, we see how treacherous memory is when it plays upon our own past, especially on our own past thoughts.

Reminiscences are not the perfect autobiography. The present modifies the past by interpreting it. We want the text without the commentary. How did his life appear to the great man before he knew that he was great?

A diary ought to be a perfectly honest autobiography, written from day to day, and therefore as true as an uncensored war correspondence. We have already half forgotten our hopes and fears at various periods during the war, and we have wholly forgotten our state of mind in July 1914. When we look back at our diaries (if we keep them) during any crisis of our lives, we shall have some surprises. We have come to tell the story differently to ourselves. We pride ourselves on our foresight, though what happened was a mere stroke of luck, and we narrowly escaped some disastrous decision.

And yet, are diaries above suspicion? Some men look forward to having their biographies written, and bequeath to their wives or best friends an edifying journal, in which they pose as much as they do at their dinner tables. Others reflect that they may have no opportunity of destroying their diaries, and are careful not to write in them anything that would distress their families. I am not thinking so much of what are politely called indiscretions, as of harsh judgments which may be highly characteristic of the writer, confidential secrets told by others, and confessions of one's own faults. ("I am sometimes troubled", said Boswell, "by a disposition to stinginess." "So am I," replied Johnson, "but I do not tell it.") Even in the happiest marriage there may be a few reserves, and no man would willingly contemplate that these should be torn aside as his wife reads his diary the week after his death. It follows that even in a diary we cannot be sure of getting a full revelation of a man's character; and most people fill their journals with ephemeral details that have no permanent interest whatever.

If, however, a man writes a diary which he feels sure that nobody will ever see except himself, he is probably perfectly truthful. There is no motive for being otherwise. He is not ashamed of recording his actions, good or bad, just as they happened. So down it all goes, as in the famous diary of Samuel Pepys, which he wrote in a cypher which he was confident that nobody would take the trouble to read. I know no other diary to be compared with it.

We are sometimes shocked, but more often amused. "Went to church this morning, Excellent sermon, but distracted by back view of pretty girl in the pew in front. Offered her a hymn-book to make her turn round. Front view disappointing, and looked cross. Plate instead of offertory-bag. Nuisance. Had to give half-a-crown. Must remember to put sixpences in my pocket." That is a slightly modernised version of what we find everywhere in Pepys. It is a human—all too human—document, though we must remember, to do the volatile Samuel justice, that he lived in the most dissolute age of English history.

Leslie Stephen wanted everyone to leave his autobiography tied up with his will. I am afraid most of us would find the compilation rather embarrassing.

17. THE SPIRIT OF CRICKET

(From "Cricket", *England Out of Doors*)

NEVILLE CARDUS

EVERY summer I travel north, south, east, and west to watch cricket. I have seen the game played far down in Kent, at Dover, near the cliffs trodden by King Lear. There, one late August afternoon, I said good-bye to a cricket season on a field which lay silent in the evening sunshine; the match, the last of the year, was over and the players gone. I stayed for a while in the falling light and saw birds run over the grass as the mists began to spread. That day we had watched Woolley in all his glory, battling his way through a hundred felicitous runs. While he battled, the crowd sat with white tents and banners all round—a blessed scene, wisps of clouds in the sky, green grass for our feet to tread upon, "laughter of friends under an English heaven." It was all over and gone now, as I stood on the little field alone in the glow of the declining day. "The passing of summer," I thought. "There can be no summer in this land without cricket."

Whenever I am in love with cricket's beauty and sentiment I always think of the game as I saw it go to an end that day in Kent, as though to the strain of summer's cadence. Cricket, as I know and love it, is part of that holiday time which is the Englishman's heritage—a play-

time in a homely countryside. It is a game that seems to me to take on the very colours of the passing months. In the spring, cricketers are fresh and eager; ambition within them breaks into bud; new bats and flannels are as chaste as the April winds. The showers of May drive the players from the field, but soon they are back again, and every blade of grass around them is a jewel in the light. I like this intermittent way of cricket's beginning in spring weather. A season does not burst on us, as football does, full grown and arrogant; it comes to us every year with a modesty that matches the slender tracery of leaf and twig, which belongs to the setting of every true cricket field in the season's first days.

When June arrives, cricket grows to splendour like a rich part of the garden of an English summer time. In June the game is at the crown of the year; from Little Puddleton to London the fields of village and town are white with players in hot action. Batsmen move along their processional way to centuries at Lord's, while in a hundred hidden hamlets far and wide some crude but not inglorious Hobbs flings his bat at the ball, and either misses it or feels his body tingle as willow thwacks leather. Bowlers set their teeth and thunder over the earth, seeing nothing in the world but a middle stump. And when a wicket falls, fieldsmen in the deep give themselves to the grassy earth, stretch limbs, and look up into the blue sky. Now is the time of cricketer's plenty—June and July. Let him cherish every moment as it passes; never will he be so young again.

With the advent of August, cricket loses the freshness

and radiance of its heyday. Colour and energy begin to leave the game, even as colour and energy begin to leave summer itself. Cricketers grow weary ; ambition wanes as the sun wanes. The season goes to its end with a modest and lovely fall. It does not finish rhetorically, as football does, vaunting a cup-tie final before a million eyes. One after another the cricketers say good-bye in the darkening evenings of late summer ; they fold their tents and depart, and nobody sees them. The noisy crowds have left the game for the new darling with the big ball. Down at Eastbourne (it may chance to be) the season comes to an end on a quiet day on which the crack, of the bat sends out a sweet melancholy. As the cricketer leaves the field, not to set foot again on his game's carpet for months and months to come, he has his moments of private sentiment. He glances back to take a last look at the field as the hours decrease and autumn grows in everything. He is glad that cricket belongs to summer, comes in with the spring, and gets ready to go when the trees are brown. Other games can be played in different parts of the world. Cricket is a game which must always be less than its true self if it is to be taken out of England and out of the weather of our English summer.

So much for the season and the setting, the time and the place. The game itself is a capricious blend of elements, static and dynamic, sensational and somnolent. You can never take your eyes away from a cricket match for fear of missing a crisis. For hours it will proceed to a rhythm as the rhythm of an airless day. Then we stretch ourselves on deck-chairs and smoke our pipes and talk of

a number of things—the old 'uns insisting that in *their* time batsmen used to hit the ball. A sudden bad stroke, a good ball, a marvellous catch, and the crowd is awake ; a bolt has been hurled into our midst from a clear sky. When cricket burns a dull slow fire it needs only a single swift wind of circumstance to set everything into a blaze that consumes nerves and senses. In no other game do events of import hang so bodefully on a single act. In no other game does one little mistake lead to mischief so irreparable. You get another chance at football if you fozzle a kick ; but Hobbs in all his majesty must pass out of the scene for hours if for a second he should fall into the error that hedges all mortal activity. Many a great match has been lost by a missed catch ; terrible are the emotions of long-on when the ball is driven high towards him and when he waits for it—alone in the world—and the crowd roars and somebody cries out, “ 'E'll miss it—'e'll miss it ! ” Years ago, in a match for the rubber in Australia, Clem Hill and Victor Trumper were making a mighty stand, turning the wheel of the game against England. Here were two of the greatest batsmen of all time thoroughly set, scourging the English attack with unsparing weapons. Hour after hour they cut and drove right and left. Wilfred Rhodes, who seems always to have been playing cricket, tossed up over after over, angling for the catch in the deep. And at the very moment when the fortunes of the battle were on the turn, moving definitely Australia's way—at this moment of fate, Clem Hill let his bat swing at the ball for all he was worth in valour and strength. Up into the sky the ball went,

and it began to drop where A. E. Knight was standing. All eyes rested on Knight ; the vast Sydney multitude were dead still as the ball fell like a stone. Knight held his catch, but as he did so, he was seen to go down on one knee, and bow his head. Some of the English players, thinking Knight was ill, moved towards him. But as they approached, Knight raised himself, made an explanatory gesture, swallowed emotion in a gulp, and said to his anxious colleagues, "It's all right, it's all right ; I was only thanking my Maker." Cricket can mean much to a man : responsibility can weigh down the strongest.

The laws of cricket tell the English love of compromise between a particular freedom and a general orderliness, or legality. Macdonald's best break-back is rendered null and void if he should let his right foot stray merely an inch over the crease as he wheels his arm. Law and order are represented at cricket by the umpires in their magisterial coats (in England it is to be hoped these coats will never be worn as short as umpires wear them in Australia, much to the loss of that dignity which should always invest dispensers of justice). And in England umpires are seldom mobbed or treated with the contumely which is the lot of the football referee. If everything else in this nation of ours were lost but cricket—her Constitution and the laws of England of Lord Halsbury—it would be possible to reconstruct from the theory and the practice of cricket all the eternal Englishness which has gone to the establishment of that Constitution and the laws aforesaid.

Where the English language is unspoken there can be

no real cricket, which is to say that the Americans have never excelled at the game. In every English village a cricket field is as much part of the landscape as the old church. Everybody born in England has some notion of what is a cricket match, even folks who have never had a cricket bat in their hands in their lives (few must be their number, since it is as natural to give a cricket bat as a present to a little boy as it is to give him a bucket and spade when he goes to the seaside). I should challenge the Englishness of any man who could walk down a country lane, come unexpectedly on a cricket match, and not lean over the fence and watch for a while. Has any true Englishman ever resisted the temptation, while travelling on the railway, to look through the carriage window whenever the train has been passing a cricket field? The train rushes round a curve just as the bowler is about to bowl ; in a flash we are swept out of sight of the game, and never can we know what happened to that ball! Cricket is not called the " Sport of Kings " ; it is the possession of all of us, high and low, rich and poor. It was born in a small place and it has conquered all the habitations of our race. Wherever cricket is taken, England and the flavours of an English summer go with it. The game's presiding genius is W. G. Grace, dead and therefore immortal. He gave his heart and soul to cricket, stamped the English stamp on it, and caused it to loom with his own genial bulk in the eyes of his countrymen for all time. To-day, when it is regarded right and proper for the nation to pay honour to all heroes of the open air, Grace would have been knighted. But the very

idea of "Sir W. G. Grace" is comical. You see, he was an institution. As well might we think of Sir Albert Memorial, Sir National Debt, Sir Harvest Moon—or Sir Cricket!

18A. A DEFENCE OF DETECTIVE STORIES

(From *The Defendant*)

G. K. CHESTERTON

IN attempting to reach the genuine psychological reason for the popularity of detective stories, it is necessary to rid ourselves of many mere phrases. It is not true, for example, that the populace prefer bad literature to good, and accept detective stories because they are bad literature. The mere absence of artistic subtlety does not make a book popular. Bradshaw's *Railway Guide* contains few gleams of psychological comedy, yet it is not read aloud uproariously on winter evenings. If detective stories are read with more exuberance than railway guides, it is certainly because they are more artistic. Many good books have fortunately been popular; many bad books, still more fortunately, have been unpopular. A good detective story would probably be even more popular than a bad one. The trouble in this matter is that many people do not realise that there is such a thing as a good detective story; it is to them like speaking of a good devil. To write a story about a burglary is, in their eyes, a sort of spiritual manner of committing it. To persons of somewhat weak sensibility this is natural enough; it must be confessed that many detective stories are as full of sensational crime as one of Shakespeare's plays.

There is, however, between a good detective story and a bad detective story as much difference as, or rather more than, there is between a good epic and a bad one. Not only is a detective story a perfectly legitimate form of art, but it has certain definite and real advantages as an agent of the public weal.

The first essential value of the detective story lies in this, that it is the earliest and only form of popular literature in which is expressed some sense of the poetry of modern life.

Men lived among mighty mountains and eternal forests for ages before they realised that they were poetical; it may reasonably be inferred that some of our descendants may see the chimney-pots as rich a purple as the mountain-peaks, and find the lamp-posts as old and natural as the trees. Of this realisation of a great city itself as something wild and obvious the detective story is certainly the "Iliad". No one can have failed to notice that in these stories the hero or the investigator crosses London with something of the loneliness and liberty of a prince in a tale of elf-land, that in the course of that incalculable journey the casual omnibus assumes the primal colours of a fairy ship. The lights of the city begin to glow like innumerable goblin eyes, since they are the guardians of some secret, however crude, which the writer knows and the reader does not. Every twist of the road is like a finger pointing to it; every fantastic skyline of chimney-pots seems wildly and derisively signalling the meaning of the mystery.

This realisation of the poetry of London is not a small

thing. A city is, properly speaking, more poetic even than a countryside, for while nature is a chaos of unconscious forces, a city is a chaos of conscious ones. The crest of the flower or the pattern of the lichen may or may not be significant symbols. But there is no stone in the street and no brick in the wall that is not actually a deliberate symbol—a message from some man, as much as if it were a telegram or a post card. The narrowest street possesses, in every crook and twist of its intention, the soul of the man who built it, perhaps long in his grave.

Every brick has as human a hieroglyph as if it were a graven brick of Babylon; every slate on the roof is as educational a document as if it were a slate covered with addition and subtraction sums. Anything which tends, even under the fantastic form of the minutiae of Sherlock Holmes, to assert this romance of detail in civilisation, to emphasise this unfathomably human character in flints and tiles is a good thing. It is good that the average man should fall into the habit of looking imaginatively at ten men in the street even if it is only on the chance that the eleventh might be a notorious thief. We may dream, perhaps, that it might be possible to have another and higher romance of London, that men's souls have stranger adventures than their bodies, and that it would be harder and more exciting to hunt their virtues than to hunt their crimes. But since our great authors (with the admirable exception of Stevenson) decline to write of that thrilling mood and moment when the eyes of the great city, like the eyes of a cat, begin to flame in the dark, we must give fair credit to the popular literature which, amid a babble

of pedantry and preciosity declines to regard the present as prosaic or the common as commonplace. Popular art in all ages has been interested in contemporary manners and costume; it dressed the groups around the Crucifixion in the garb of Florentine gentlefolk or Flemish burghers. In the last century it was the custom for distinguished actors to present Macbeth in a powdered wig and ruffles. How far we are ourselves in this age, from such conviction of the poetry of our own life and manners may easily be conceived by anyone who chooses to imagine a picture of Alfred the Great toasting the cakes dressed in tourist's knickerbockers, or a performance of *Hamlet* in which the prince appeared in a frock-coat, with a crepe band round his hat.

But this instinct of the age to look back, like Lot's wife, could not go on for ever. A rude, popular literature of the romantic possibilities of the modern city was bound to arise. It has arisen in the popular detective stories, as rough and refreshing as the ballads of Robin Hood.

There is, however, another good work that is done by detective stories. While it is the constant tendency of the Old Adam to rebel against so universal and automatic a thing as civilisation, to preach departure and rebellion, the romance of police activity keeps in some sense before the mind the fact that civilisation itself is the most sensational of departures and the most romantic of rebellions. By dealing with the unsleeping sentinels who guard the outposts of society, it tends to remind us that we live in an armed camp, making war with a chaotic world, and that the criminals, the children of chaos, are nothing but

the traitors within our gates. When the detective in a police romance stands alone, and somewhat fatuously fearless amid the knives and fists of a thieves' kitchen, it does certainly serve to make us remember that it is the agent of social justice who is the original and poetic figure, while the burglars and footpads are merely placid old cosmic conservatives, happy in the immemorial respectability of apes and wolves. The romance of the police force is thus the whole romance of man. It is based on the fact that morality is the most dark and daring of conspiracies. It reminds us that the whole noiseless and unnoticeable police management by which we are ruled and protected is only a successful knight-errantry.

18B. THE WATSON TOUCH

(From *If I May*)

A. A. MILNE

THERE used to be a song which affirmed (now truly, I do not know) that every nice girl loved a sailor. I am prepared to state, though I do not propose to make a song about it, that every nice man loves a detective story.

This week I have been reading the last adventures of Sherlock Holmes—I mean really the last adventures, ending with his triumph over the German spy in 1914. Having saved the Empire, Holmes returned to his farm on the Sussex downs, and there, for all I mind, he may stay. I have no great affection for the twentieth-century Holmes. But I will give the warmest welcome to as many of the Baker Street Holmes as Watson likes to reconstruct for us. There is no reason why the supply of these should ever give out. “It was, I remember, at the close of a winter’s day in 1894”—when Watson begins like this, then I am prepared to listen.

Fortunately, all the stories in this last book, with the exception of the very indifferent spy story, are of the Baker Street days, the days when Watson said, “Holmes, this is marvellous!” Reading them now—with, I suppose, a more critical mind than I exhibited twenty years ago—I see that Holmes was not only a great detective,

but a very lucky one. There is an occasion when he suddenly asks the doctor why he had a Turkish bath. Utterly unnerved, Watson asks how he knew, to which the great detective says that it is as obvious as is the fact that the doctor had shared a hansom with a friend that morning. But when Holmes explains further, we see how lucky he is. Watson, he says, has some mud on his left trouser; therefore he sat on the left side of a hansom; therefore he shared it with a friend, for otherwise he would have sat in the middle. Watson's boots, he continues, have obviously been tied by a stranger; therefore he has had them off in a Turkish bath or a boot-shop, and since the newness of the boots makes it unlikely that he has been buying another pair, therefore he must have been to a Turkish bath. "Holmes," says Watson, "this is marvellous!"

Marvellously lucky, anyway. For, however new his boots, poor old Watson might have been buying a pair of pumps, or bedroom slippers, or tennis shoes that morning or even, if the practice allowed such extravagance, a second pair of boots. And there was, of course, no reason whatever why he should not have sat at the side of his hansom, even if alone. It is much more comfortable, and is, in fact, what one always did in the hansom days, and still does in a taxi. So if Holmes was right on this occasion, he was right by luck and not by deduction.

But that must be the best of writing a detective story, that you can always make the lucky shots come off. In no other form of fiction, I imagine, does the author feel so certainly that he is the captain of the ship. If he wants it

so, he has it so. Is the solution going to be too easy? Then he puts in an unexpected footprint in the geranium bed, or a strange face at the window, and makes it more difficult. Is the reader being kept too much in the dark? Then a conversation overheard in the library will make it easier for him. The author's only trouble is that he can never be certain whether his plot is too obscure or too obvious. He knows himself that the governess is guilty, and, in consequence, she can hardly raise her eyebrows without seeming to him to give the whole thing away.

There was a time when I began to write a detective story for myself. My murder, I thought, was rather cleverly carried out. The villain sent a letter to his victim, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for an answer. The gum of the envelope was poisoned. I did not know, nor did I bother to find out, whether it was possible, but this, as I said just now, is the beauty of writing a detective story. If there is no such quick-working poison, then you invent one. If up to the moment when the doubt occurs to you, your villain had been living in Brixton, you immediately send him to Central Africa, where he extracts a poison from a deadly root according to the prescription of the chief medicine-man. ("It is the poison into which the Swabiji dip their arrows," you tell the reader casually, as if he really ought to have known it for himself.) Well, then, I invented my poison, and my villain put it on the gum of a self-addressed envelope, and enclosed it with a letter asking for the victim's autograph. He then posted the letter, whereupon a very tragic thing happened.

What happened was that, having left the letter in the post for some years while I formed fours and saluted, I picked up a magazine in the mess one day and began to read a detective story. It was a very baffling one, and I really didn't see how the murderer could have possibly committed his foul deed. But the detective was on to it at once. He searched the waste-paper basket, and, picking an envelope therefrom, said, "Ha!" It was just about then that I said "Ha!" too, and also other things, for my half-finished story was now useless. Somebody else had thought of the same idea. But though I was very sorry for this, I could not help feeling proud that my idea had made such a good story. Indeed, since then I have fancied myself rather as a detective-story writer, and if only I could think of something which nobody else would think of while I was thinking of it, I would try again.

19A. NAPOLEON

HERBERT FISHER

As we think of Napoleon Bonaparte what a world of visions and memories rises before the mind! Who does not know the outward form of the greatest conqueror and captain of modern times : the small, almost dwarfish figure, the rounded symmetry of the head, the pale olive cheek and massive brow, the nose and lips carved as it were from the purest marble of the antique world, and above all the deep-set eyes of lustrous grey, now flashing with electric fires, now veiled in impenetrable contemplation? The set of his figure is familiar too, as are the clothes in which it has been the delight of painters to portray him. We know the compact energy of his chest and shoulders, the flashing imperiousness of each gesture and movement, the white teeth and delicate hands, and the little cocked hat and long coat of grey in which he was used to ride to victory. Who has not seen him in print and picture, the gaunt young hero of the Republic charging with the flag of Arcola, the Emperor kneeling before the altar of Notre-Dame in the long and sumptuous robes of his coronation, the grim leader of a haggard cavalcade treading the deadly snows of a Russian winter, the cloaked figure upon a ship's deck with huddled shoulders

and sunken chin and a far-off look of tragedy in his set and melancholy gaze? And the thoughts and feelings which glow into consciousness at the sound of this illustrious name are every bit as varied and chequered as the outward events of his life seen through the imagination of the painter. Perhaps in the whole range of history no one has aroused emotions so opposite and so intense, or within his own lifetime has claimed so much of the admiration, the fear, and the hatred of mankind. Even the colder critics of posterity view his course not only with mixed and blended judgments, but with a kind of bewilderment at the union in one life and character of so much grandeur and roguery, gold and alloy. For those to whom psychological analysis is wearisome he stands simply as the miraculous man of action, who without assistance of wealth or station mounted to the highest pinnacle of human fortune. And so long as men go to the past for the pathos and romance of great vicissitudes of fortune, or for the serious interest of feats of statesmanship, or for documents of human power and resolve, or for the more elusive secrets of the passionate temperament, or else that they may win an insight into the human forces which move the world, they will continue to study the life of Napoleon, and to find in it at the very least a story as wonderful as those of the giants and fairies, and at the most the greatest explosion of human energy which in modern times has altered the politics of civilised man.

19B. NAPOLEON
(From *Napoleon : The Last Phase*).

LORD ROSEBERRY

WAS he a great man? . . . If by "great" be intended the combination of moral qualities with those of intellect, great he certainly was not. But that he was great in the sense of being extraordinary and supreme we can have no doubt. If greatness stands for natural power, for predominance, for something human beyond humanity, then Napoleon was assuredly great. Besides that indefinable spark which we call genius, he represents a combination of intellect and energy which has never, perhaps, been equalled; never, certainly, surpassed. He carried human faculty to the farthest point of which we have accurate knowledge. Alexander is a remote prodigy, too remote for precise comparison. To Cæsar the same objection is applicable. Homer and Shakespeare are impersonal names. Besides, we need for comparison men of action and business. Of all these great figures, it may be said that we do not know enough. But Napoleon lived under the modern microscope. Under the fiercest glare of scrutiny he enlarged indefinitely the limits of human conception and human possibility. Till he had lived, no one could realise that there could be so stupendous a combination of military and civil genius, such comprehension of

view united to such grasp of detail, such prodigious vitality of body and mind. "He contracts history", said Madame d'Houdetot, "and expands imagination." "He has thrown a doubt", said Lord Dudley, "on all past glory; he has made all future renown possible." This is hyperbole, but with a substance of truth. No name represents so completely and conspicuously dominion, splendour, and catastrophe. He raised himself by the use, and ruined himself by the abuse of superhuman faculties. He was wrecked by the extravagance of his own genius. No less powers than those which had effected could have achieved his fall.

20. MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS

I Observe

(From *David Copperfield*)

CHARLES DICKENS

THE first objects that assume a distinct presence before me, as I look far back, into the blank of my infancy, are my mother with her pretty hair and youthful shape, and Peggotty, with no shape at all, and eyes so dark that they seemed to darken their whole neighbourhood in her face, and cheeks and arms so hard and red that I wondered the birds didn't peck her in preference to apples.

I believe I can remember these two at a little distance apart, dwarfed to my sight by stooping down or kneeling on the floor, and I going unsteadily from one to the other. I have an impression on my mind which I cannot distinguish from actual remembrance, of the touch of Peggotty's forefinger as she used to hold it out to me, and of its being roughened by needlework, like a pocket nutmeg-grater.

What else do I remember? Let me see.

There comes out of the cloud, our house—not new to me, but quite familiar, in its earliest remembrance. On the ground-floor is Peggotty's kitchen, opening into a back yard ; with a pigeon-house on a pole, in the centre,

without any pigeons in it; a great dog-kennel in the corner without any dog; and a quantity of fowls that look terribly tall to me, walking about, in a menacing and ferocious manner. There is one cock who gets upon a post to crow, and seems to take particular notice of me as I look at it through the kitchen window, who makes me shiver, he is so fierce. Of the geese outside the side-gate who come waddling after me with their long necks stretched out when I go that way, I dream at night; as a man environed by wild beasts might dream of lions.

Here is a long passage—what an enormous perspective I make of it!—leading from Peggotty's kitchen to the front door. A dark store-room opens out of it, and that is a place to be run past at night; for I don't know what may be among those tubs and jars and old tea-chests, when there is nobody in there with a dimly-burning light, letting a mouldy air come out at the door, in which there is a smell of soup, pickles, pepper, candles, coffee, all at one whiff. Then there are the two parlors; the parlor in which we sit of an evening, my mother and I and Peggotty—for Peggotty is quite our companion, when her work is done and we are alone—and the best parlor where we sit on a Sunday; grandly, but not so comfortably. There is something of a doleful air about that room to me.

Here is our pew in the church. What a high-backed pew! With a window near it, out of which our house can be seen, and *is* seen many times during the morning's service by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it is not being robbed or is not in flames.

But though Peggotty's eye wanders she is much offended if mine does, and frowns to me, as I stand upon the seat, to look at the clergyman. But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of him wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to enquire—and what am I to do? It is a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, but *she* pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the isle, and *he* makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep—I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church. I feel that if I look at him any longer, I might be tempted to say something out loud; and what would become of me then? I look up at the monumental tablets on the wall, and try to think of Mr. Bodgers late of this parish, and what the feelings of Mrs. Bodgers must have been, when affliction sore, long time Mr. Bodgers bore, and physicians were in vain. I wonder whether they called Mr. Chillip, and he was in vain; and if so, how he liked to be reminded of it once a week. I look from Mr. Chillip, in his Sunday neck cloth, to the pulpit; and think what a good place it would be to play in, and what a castle it would make, with another boy coming up the stairs to attack it, and having the velvet cushion with the tassels thrown down on his head. In time my eyes gradually shut up; and, from seeming to hear the clergyman singing a drowsy song in the heat, I hear nothing, until I fall off the seat with a crash, and am taken out, more dead than alive, by Peggotty.

And now I see the outside of our house, with the latticed bedroom windows standing open to let in the sweet-smelling air, and the ragged old rooks'-nests still dangling in the elm trees at the bottom of the front garden. Now I am in the garden at the back, beyond the yard where the empty pigeon-house and dog-kennel are, —a very preserve of butterflies, as I remember it, with a high fence, and a gate in padlock; where the fruit clusters on the trees, riper and richer than fruit has ever been since, in any other garden, and where my mother gathers some in the basket, while I stand by, bolting furtive gooseberries, and trying to look unmoved. A great wind rises, and the summer is gone in a moment. We are playing in the winter twilight, dancing about the parlour. When my mother is out of breath and rests herself in an elbow-chair, I watch her winding her bright curls round her fingers, and straightening her waist, and nobody knows better than I do that she likes to look so well, and is proud of being so pretty.

That is among my earliest impressions. That, and a sense that we were both a little afraid of Peggotty, and submitted ourselves in most things to her direction, were among the first opinions—if they may be so called—that I ever derived from what I saw. '

21. SPEED

(From *Speed*)

PROFESSOR A. M. LOW

WE usually use the word "speed" in the sense of high speed, although the statement that a motorist was speeding down the road might literally mean that he was travelling at four miles per hour. It is astonishing what a range of speeds we see every day. Our definition of solids and liquids, for instance, is based upon speed. You do not agree? Well, think it out. We call a lump of steel a solid, because it retains its shape unless it is severely hammered. And we call water a liquid because it takes the shape of the vessel into which it is put. Now what about a lump of clay?

The clay takes the shape you give it, but keep it moist and very gradually it will take the shape of the box containing it. It is simply a matter of time. The water takes the shape of the vessel immediately, that is at a speed so high that we cannot see it. The clay takes longer—perhaps years, because its speed is smaller. Viscous substances, such as tar and treacle, come between these two. And I have no doubt that given long enough the steel also will change its shape—though it might require a few million years.

In the street we see men walking at a speed of four

miles an hour—or if they are policemen two and a half miles per hour. It takes a very great deal of effort for a man to increase his walking speed—a “crack” may walk at nine miles an hour, and if he started running he would only increase his speed to fourteen miles per hour. If he jumped on to a horse—and the horse was a good horse—his speed might rise to nearly forty miles per hour, but to travel as fast as possible on four legs he would have to perform the difficult task of mounting a cheetah, whose speed has been estimated over short distances at between fifty and sixty miles per hour.

When you pass from four legs to wheels, speed mounts up. Technically the system of levers which we call legs has a low efficiency and a low maximum speed. At various times walking machines have been invented, but *they have been no more successful than “flapping wing” aeroplanes*. When it comes to speed, the wheel is as superior to the leg as the propeller is to the flapping wing. That does not say that in the future we shall not achieve some entirely new method of movement that will eclipse our present speeds. It must not be forgotten that even the wheel had to be invented—the invention is generally credited to some unknown primitive man who found the benefits of log rolling.

On two wheels over one hundred and ten miles have been covered in an hour with the aid of an engine. To many people it will be a surprise that a pedal cyclist has covered as much as seventy-six and a half miles in an hour. Fortunately the pedal cyclists on our main roads show no desire to travel at this speed, although some of them like

to get behind a motor vehicle, which is the secret of speed. The seventy-six and a half miles was covered by a cyclist who was paced by a motor cycle, but the high speed can be attributed less to the property of the motor cycle in setting a pace than to its acting as a wind-shield and even setting up a partial vacuum that literally coupled the pedal cycle to the motor cycle. A vacuum is a fine link though you cannot see it—hence the principle of the Westinghouse brake.

Speed is one of the 'most fascinating subjects of science. It is entirely relative. The snail that tells his wife he tore home to supper is no bigger liar than the man who tells his wife he has run all the way from the station.

22. A VISIT TO A POTTERY

(From *English Journey*).

J. B. PRIESTLEY

THE first place I went over was not one of the ordinary "potbanks" but belonged to a firm engaged in one of the new specialised branches of the industry, chiefly in making what is known as "electrical porcelain", insulators and insulating fittings. The range of these things was enormous, from tiny switches and the like no bigger than a waistcoat button, to giant insulators some of them bigger than a man, for the grid. All these articles have to be made with extreme care, for as parts of elaborate fittings they have to have exact measurements, perhaps to the hundredth of an inch, and they must retain, under great stress, all their insulating properties. A bad job could easily cost an electrician his life. It is no joke doing delicate and intricate engineering with baked clay, which is what this business amounts to. For most of the people engaged in it, excluding the technical men in charge, the actual work here is not so interesting as that in factories I explored later, where the domestic and more decorative earthenware and porcelain are manufactured. Nevertheless, the first thing to report is that all the people I saw at work here, from the experts down to the scores of girls busy with the small moulds, seemed to be enjoy-

ing themselves. It was as cheerful a factory as I have ever seen. I saw no sullen robots about. They all looked both brisk and contented. One reason for this, I firmly believe, is that clay—of which, after all, we ourselves are said to be largely composed—is cheerful companionable stuff. As they will soon tell you here, it has life in it ; not so much life as wood has, perhaps, but a great deal more than most substances have. The earlier processes of this work were the same as those elsewhere, so I will leave them till later. But the method of firing was different here, for instead of being baked in the great bottle-shaped kilns, which you see peeping over the chimney pots everywhere, these things, when ready for the fire, were stacked on a small and very slow train that crawled almost imperceptibly into a long oven. In the middle section of this oven there is a terrifically high temperature. You can take a quick peep at the furnace through small holes here and there ; and what you can see in there would inspire the sermons of many Christian divines. The insulators all come out at the other end, a few hours afterwards, done to a turn.

I was fascinated by the method of testing them. There is a special room for this and inside this room is a small glass-sided chamber where the insulators to be tested are linked together in an electrical series. The door is fastened and then the young man in charge, thoroughly enjoying himself, begins turning on switches and pulling down handles. When we were there he put 75,000 volts through the series, and I stared through the window at those unfortunate insulators, wondering all the time if

the whole weird business would suddenly jump out of control. Inside, there was a ferocious cracking, and violet lightning played all round the insulators. Apparently if there is a flaw in one of them, the thin chain hanging below is broken. (At least I believe so, but I must confess I am very vague about these technicalities. It is no use my saying I am like a child where electricity is concerned, because nowadays children seem to be born with the faculty for comprehending high tension and low tension and voltages and amperes and watts. I will say then that I know as much about electricity as the average Asiatic peasant. I do not try to be dense about it, but there is something inside me that refuses to learn, understand, remember.) Needless to say, the insulators are given a very severe testing, being put to a stress well beyond that of their final work. While I was still recovering from the crackings and violet lightnings, the chief electrical engineer of the firm caught me. There was a gleam in his eye. This, it seemed, was mere baby play. Would I like to see their new big transformer at work? I did not know what a transformer was, but I have a vulgar or perhaps childish mind, and as the thing was both new and big, and he spoke of it with such obvious respect, I said there was nothing I should like better. So we went across to the power-house or whatever the place is called. It is in there, I think, that they test the giants ; and one day if they are not careful, they will shrivel up the whole Potteries.

This power-house, as I shall now persist in calling it, was a very austere place, with very little inside it, but

what there was inside it made you feel uneasy. It would have served excellently as a set for a film about the future. Actually, I suppose it represented the immediate present better than most places, and it shows how fast things are moving, how hopeless it is our trying to catch up with them, when we feel that something that is essentially of the present looks like a glimpse of the future. This electrical engineer and his two brisk and cheerful young assistants we found in the power-house were men of the present in a sense in which I, for example, am not a man of the present but only a man trying to catch up. They had that look, that happy absorption in their work, that passion for explaining and demonstrating, all of which we find in these men essentially of the present, in electrical engineers, motor-car designers, aviators, wireless technicians, and the like. This is their age and they are completely at home in it, unlike the rest of us, who are desperately trying to make ourselves at home in it. This queer building was their proper setting. Its very austerity, I suspect, was typical of the new world. We stood on a small balcony. At the other end was some very strange apparatus, in which the most noticeable and exciting objects were two big copper globes. They suggested magic, not the old messy alchemists' wizardry, all happening in a stuffy crowded little place, but magic brought up-to-date, clean and bare and glittering. There, it appeared, was the big new transformer, capable of raising the power, within a few minutes, to half a million volts. It would perform for my benefit. Huge blue blinds were pulled down and the lights were turned out.

They shouted "O.K." at one another. On the little balcony, now hanging over immense gloom, it was not altogether O.K. What were 500,000 volts? And could they be turned on and off, like so much bath-water? What if the big copper globes decided to do something they had never done before? It was all right for these other fellows; they were servants or masters or at least colleagues of the power in there; but I was a stranger and ignorant; suppose it took a dislike to me? There was a noise. It was the god stirring. They had roused him. The violet lightning flashed again, but now not only was there more of it but the lightning was a deeper violet and further removed from the colouring of this world. There was a gathering fury behind it now. I have never heard a noise that carried with it such a suggestion of enormous power. It was not loud, but somehow it bored into your ears. You felt that you could have split town-halls with it. There seemed a possibility that this building was being split and that the unearthly violet light was glaring through the cracks. I had been warned that when the voltage reached the necessary figure, the current would jump the gap between the two movable copper globes. Now it jumped. Half a million volts. Blue lightning. All over. The god retreated, muttering; and we blinked at one another in honest daylight again. There was talk of lunch. While the others were being technical about the transformer, I told myself that though these fellows, here and all over the world, probably knew what they were about, this trick of stirring up the violet-hot god, making him give a

performance, and then hurrying him out again, was very sinister. They would do it once too often. Some morning there would be one gigantic blue flash and the whole industrial midlands would look like a smoking dustbin—or even more like a smoking dustbin than they do now. There is in front of us—we are definitely “in for”—an electrified world. It will be filled with cheerful young men in overalls, looking all alike and smoking the same kind of cigarette; and they will play about with millions and millions of volts. Until one of them, being a trifle absent-minded, will pull the wrong lever. Astronomers out Sirius way—beings perhaps shaped like gigantic crabs—will note a disturbance in the Solar System. I hurried with the others to the firm’s dining-room: I thought, let us lunch while we can.

23. SUPERSTITION

(From *Not that it Matters*)

A. A. MILNE

LIFE must be a very tricky thing for the superstitious. At dinner a night or two ago I happened to say that I had never been in danger of drowning. I am not sure now that it was true, but I still think that it was harmless. However, before I had time to elaborate my theme (whatever it was) I was peremptorily ordered to touch wood. I protested that both my feet were on the polished oak and both my elbows on the polished mahogany (one always knew that some good instinct inspired the pleasant habit of elbows on the table), and that anyhow I did not see the need. However, because one must not argue at dinner I tapped the table two or three times . . . and now I suppose I am immune. At the same time I should like to know exactly whom I have appeased.

For this must be the idea of the wood-touching superstition, that a malignant spirit dogs one's conversational footsteps, listening eagerly for the complacent word. "I have never had the mumps," you say airily. "Ha, ha!" says the spirit, "haven't you? Just you wait till next Tuesday, my boy." Unconsciously we are crediting Fate with our own human weaknesses. If a man standing on the edge of a pond said aloud, "I have never fallen

into a pond in my life," and we happened to be just behind him, the temptation to push him in would be irresistible. Irresistible, that is, by us ; but it is charitable to assume that Providence can control itself by now.

Of course, nobody really thinks that our good or evil spirits have any particular feeling about wood, that they like it stroked ; nobody, I suppose, not even the most superstitious, really thinks that Fate is especially touchy in the matter of salt and ladders. Equally, of course, many people who throw salt over their left shoulder are not superstitious in the least, and are only concerned to display that readiness in the face of any social emergency which is said to be the mark of good manners. But there are certainly many who feel that it is the part of a wise man to propitiate the unknown, to bend before the forces which work for harm ; and they pay tribute to Fate by means of these little customs in the hope that they will secure in return an immunity from evil. The tribute is nominal, but it is an acknowledgment all the same.

24. SHOPS AND SHOPPING

LEIGH HUNT

To begin, where our shopping experience began, with the toyshop :

Visions of glory, spare our aching sight!

Ye just-breech'd ages, crowd not on our soul!

We still seem to have a lively sense of the smell of that gorgeous red paint which was on the handle of our first wooden sword! The pewter guard also—how beautifully fretted and silver like did it look! How did we hang it round our shoulder by the proud belt of an old ribbon,—then feel it well suspended; then draw it out of its sheath, eager to cut down four savage men for ill-using ditto of damsels! An old muff made an excellent grenadier's cap; or one's hat and feather with the assistance of three surreptitious large drawing pins, became fiercely modern and military. There it is in that corner of the window—the same identical sword, to all appearance, which kept us awake the first night behind our pillow. We still feel ourselves little boys while standing in this shop; and for that matter, so we do on other occasions. A field has as much merit in our eyes, and ginger-bread almost as much in our mouths, as in that daisy-plucking and cake-eating period of our lives. There is the trigger

rattling gun, fine of its kind, but not so complete a thing as the sword. Its memories are not so ancient: for Alexander or St. George did not fight with a musket. Neither is it so true a thing; it is not "life like". The trigger is too much like that of a cross-bow; and the pea which it shoots, however hard, produces, even to the imaginative faculties of boyhood, a humiliating flash of the mock heroic. It is difficult to fancy a dragon killed with a pea; but the shape and appurtenances of the sword being genuine, the whole sentiment of massacre is as much in its wooden blade as if it were steel of Damascus. The drum is still more real, though not so heroic. In the corner opposite are battledores and shuttlecocks, which have their maturer beauties; balls, which possess the additional zest of the danger of breaking people's windows; ropes, good for swinging and skipping, especially the long ones which others turn for you, while you run in a masterly manner up and down, or skip in one spot with an easy and endless exactitude of toe, looking alternately at their conscious faces; blood-allies, with which the possessor of a crisp finger- and thumb-knuckle causes the smitten marbles to vanish out of the ring; kites, which must appear to more vital birds a ghastly kind of fowl, with their grim, long, white faces, no bodies, and endless tails;—cricket bats, manly to handle;—trap-bats, a genteel inferiority;—swimming-corks, despicable;—horses on wheels, an imposition on the infant public;—rocking horses, too much like Pegasus, ardent yet never getting on;—Dutch toys, so like life, that they ought to be better;—Jacob's ladders,

flapping down one over another their tintinnabulary shutters ;—dissected maps, from which the infant statesman may learn how to dovetail provinces and kingdoms ;—paper posture makers, who hitch up their knees against their shoulder blades, and dangle their legs like an opera dancer ;—Lilliputian plates, dishes, and other household utensils, in which a grand dinner is served up out of half an apple ;—boxes of paints, to colour engravings with, always beyond the outline ;—ditto of bricks, a very sensible and lasting toy, which we except from a grudge we have against the gravity of infant geometrics ;—whips, very useful for cutting people's eyes unawares ;—hoops, one of the most ancient as well as excellent of toys ;—sheets of pictures, from A Apple-pie up to farming, military, and zoological exhibitions, always taking care that the Fly is as large as the Elephant, and the letter X exclusively appropriated to Xerxes ;—musical deal-boxes, rather complaining than sweet, and more like a peal of bodkins than bells ;—penny trumpets, awful at Bartlemytide ;—jews' harps, that thrill and breathe between the lips like a metal tongue ;—carts—carriages—hobby-horses, upon which the infant equestrian prances about proudly on his own feet ;—in short, not to go through the whole representative body of existence—dolls, which are so dear to the maternal instincts of little girls. We protest, however, against that abuse of them, which makes them full-dressed young ladies in body, while they remain infant in face ; especially when they are of frail wax. It is cultivating finery instead of affection. We prefer good, honest, plump limbs of

cotton and saw-dust, dressed in baby-linen ; or even our ancient young friends, with their staring dotted eyes, red varnished faces, triangular noses, and Rosinante wooden limbs—not, it must be confessed, excessively shapely or feminine, but the reverse of fragile beauty, and prepared against all disasters.

The next step is to the pastry-cook's, where the plain bun is still the pleasantest thing in our eyes, from its respectability in those of childhood. The pastry, less patronised by judicious mothers, is only so much elegant indigestion ; yet it is not easy to forget the pleasure of nibbling away the crust all round a raspberry or currant tart, in order to enjoy the three or four semicircular bites at the fruity plenitude remaining. There is a custard with a wall of paste round it, which provokes a siege of this kind ; and the cheese cake has its amenities of approach. The acid flavour is a relief to the mawkishness of the biffin or pressed baked apple, and an addition to the glib and quivering likeness of the jelly. Twelfth Cake, which, when cut, looks like the side of a rich pit of earth covered with snow, is pleasant from warmer associations. Confectionery does not seem in the same request as of old ; its paint has hurt its reputation. Yet the school-boy has still much to say for its humbler suavities. Kisses are very amiable and allegorical. Eight or ten of them, judiciously wrapped up in pieces of letter paper, have saved many a loving heart the trouble of a less eloquent billet-doux. Candied citron we look upon to be the very acme and atticism of confectionery grace. Preserves are too much of a good thing, with the exception of the jams

that retain their fruit-skins. "Jam satis." They qualify the cloying. Yet marmalade must not be passed over in these times, when it has been raised to the dignity of the peerage. The other day there was a Duke of Marmalade in Hayti, and a Count of Lemonade,—so called, from places in which those eminent relishes are manufactured. After all, we must own that there is but one thing for which we care much at a pastry-cook's, except our old acquaintance the bun ; especially as we can take up that and go on. It is an ice. Fancy a very hot day ; the blinds down ; the loungers unusually languid ; the pavement burning one's feet ; the sun, with a strong outline in the street, baking one whole side of it like a brick-kiln, so that everybody is crowding on the other, except a man going to intercept a creditor bound for the continent. Then think of a heaped-up ice, brought upon a salver with a spoon. What statesman, of any warmth of imagination, would not pardon the Neapolitans in summer, for an insurrection on account of the want of ice ? Think of the first sidelong dip of the spoon in it, bringing away a well-sliced lump ; then of the sweet wintry refreshment, that goes lengthening down one's throat ; and, lastly, of the sense of power and satisfaction resulting from having had the ice.

Not heaven itself can do away that slice ;

But what has been, has been ; and I have had my ice.

25. GIFTS

MARY E. COLERIDGE

THERE are gifts that are no gifts, just as there are books that are no books. A donation is not a gift.

A portrait painted—a teapot presented—by subscription, is not a gift. The giving is divided among too many. The true gift is from one to one. Furthermore, tea, sugar and flannel petticoats are not gifts. If I bestow these conveniences on one old woman, she may regard them in that aspect ; but if I bestow them on eleven others at the same time, she looks upon them as her right. By giving more I have given less. The dole is no more like the gift than charity is like love. A £50 cheque on the occasion of a marriage between Blank and Blank is not a gift ; it is a transfer of property.

And why is it “*de rigueur*” that if somebody I like goes into partnership with somebody she likes, I must give her an enormous silver buttonhook when she has six already? The pleasure I confer upon her by doing so is not worth the value of the penny stamp which she must, equally “*de rigueur*”, waste on informing me she is pleased. It is not within the bounds of possibility that a human being can appreciate more than—say fifty presents at a time, when she has to write notes for them

all. The line should be drawn at fifty—for large and generous natures at seventy; and all friends who have not sent in their buttonhooks before a certain date should be requested to distribute them over the coming years instead. As a lily in winter, so is the unexpected gift. But the gift that arrives by tens and tens is a nightmare and an oppression.

Again, the periodical gift is never refreshing; it is too much of the nature of tribute. A present on Midsummer Day would be worth two at Christmas.

The free gift only cometh of the free.

The articles of furniture—lamps, matchboxes, footstools, and so on—duly exchanged between members of the same family, at certain seasons are not gifts. They are a kind of tax levied by duty on liking, and duty claims the credit of them. Liking responds' with what is called gratitude—a doubtful virtue at best, impossible between two friends—too near obsequiousness in the poor, too hollow for sincerity in the rich. There is no element of surprise about these presents. The spirit of giving is killed by regularity. How can I care—except in a maternal way—for what is part of my annual income? The heart is not interested. I get these things because my name is down on a piece of paper, not because someone is possessed with an impatient desire to please or share pleasure.

Rarely, among the many things that are passed from hand to hand, is one a gift; and the giver is not so common as he was. System has attacked and ruined him even

in the nursery. Santa Claus no longer comes down the chimney on Christmas Eve as he (or she) did when the child was never sure what might be in his stocking. As soon as he can write at all—or sooner—the child writes a list of “Christmas wishes”, and these are conscientiously fulfilled by his father and mother, who know a great deal more than his grandfather and grandmother knew, only they do not know—unless he tells them—what it is that he wants. A feeling of depressed amazement stole over me one day when I heard a little girl enumerating the items on her list :

A Writing-desk.

A Muff.

A Prayer Book.

A whole Family of Giraffes.

What sort of mother could that have been who was not aware that her daughter wanted a Whole Family of Giraffes unless she saw it in black and white? And as for the Writing-desks and Muffs and Prayer-books, the child ought to have had them anyhow. We should never have thought such things were presents at all when we were young ; the bare necessities of life!

No. A gift—to be a gift—must be not asked for. Dante laid down this rule, with many others, which led one to reflect that it must have been difficult to give him a present. The request is payment ; he who receives in this case buys, though he who gives cannot be accused of selling. The poet also decrees that a gift which is not so valuable to the recipient as it would be to the giver is no true gift. Romantic generosity would have been spared

many a pang, had she considered this precept. "The Falcon" would not have been cooked for dinner; the life of "the Kentucky Cardinal" might have been saved. People who have pearls are curiously fond of stringing them together and offering them to pigs. It makes the pigs unhappy in the end.

There is a third saying of Dante, which is a counsel of perfection; the face of the gift should resemble the face of him to whom the gift is given. If this be so, only those who understand each other's appearance should venture to give. My friend, who has an expression like a beautiful sermon, must not present me with a volume of Lightfoot when French novels are written all over my speaking countenance. Neither must I inflict on her the works of "Gyp".

It is a complicated business altogether. Three minutes of serious thinking make it impossible for anyone to give anyone anything. Yet the deed is done every year boldly and openly, and few are sensible that they have undertaken a more delicate transaction than the robbery of a Bank in broad daylight.

When Rosalind, at a moment's notice, gave Orlando the chain from her neck, the action was perfect on her side and on his. Any man a little lower than Shakespeare would have made Orlando show it and talk about it in the forest; he would not have let it pass without a single further allusion. Celia remembers, she teases Rosalind; but the two lovers will never speak of it again. There was no merit in Rosalind; she gave because she could not help herself. How could Orlando thank her except in

silence? Like another young gentleman in the same circumstances ; he had been little happy could he have said how much.

There is in some natures a high intolerance of the airy fetters cast around the heart by the constant memory of beneficence. They give freely, but freely they do not receive. They must send something by return of post, like the two friends in *Elizabeth and her German Garden*, who regularly transmitted to each other the same candlestick and the same note-book turn about as each anniversary chimed the hour on their clocks—whereby they saved an incalculable amount of time, money and emotion. One sweet lady goes as far as to say that all presents should be of a perishable nature—a basket of fruit, a bunch of flowers—that they may at once be forgotten.

Yet, if the truth were known, it might be found that the smaller, the more insignificant the gift, the longer it is remembered. There may be many motives for keeping the Golden Rose ; there can only be one for keeping a rose-leaf. Thus it was said by a man of old time who knew what a woman liked and gave her a distaff : “ Great grace goes with a little gift, and all the offerings of friends are precious.”

26. A NIGHT AMONG THE PINES

(From *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes*)

R. L. STEVENSON

FROM Bleynard after dinner, although it was already late, I set out to scale a portion of the Lozère. An ill-marked stony drove-road guided me forward ; and I met nearly half a dozen bullock-carts descending from the woods, each laden with a whole pine-tree for the winter's firing. At the top of the woods, which do not climb very high upon this cold ridge, I struck leftward by a path among the pines, until I hit on a dell of green turf, where a streamlet made a little spout over some stones to serve me for a water-tap. "In a more sacred or sequestered bower . . . nor nymph nor faunus haunted." The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade : there was no outlook, except north-eastward upon distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky ; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I had made my arrangements and fed Modestine, the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal ; and as soon as the sun went down, I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof ; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dew

and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afieid. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely ; even as she takes her rest, she turns and smiles ; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outdoor world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows ; sheep break their fast on the dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns ; and houseless men who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night.

At what inaudible summons, at what gentle touch of Nature, are all these sleepers thus recalled in the same hour to life? Do the stars rain down an influence, or do we share some thrill of mother earth below our resting bodies? Even shepherds and old country-folk, who are the deepest read in the arcana, have not a guess as to the means or purpose of this nightly resurrection. Towards two in the morning they declare the *thing* takes place ; and neither know nor inquire further. And at least it is a pleasant incident. We are disturbed in our slumber only, like the luxurious Montaigne, "that we may the better and more sensibly relish it." We have a moment to look upon the stars. And there is a special pleasure for some minds in the reflection that we share the impulse with all

outdoor creatures in our neighbourhood, that we have escaped out of the Bastille of civilisation, and are become, for the time being, a mere kindly animal and a sheep of Nature's flock.

When that hour came to me among the pines, I wakened thirsty. My tin was standing by me half full of water. I emptied it at a draught; and feeling broad awake after this internal cold aspersion, sat upright to make a cigarette. The stars were clear, coloured, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapour stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir-points stood upright and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see Modestine walking round and round at the length of her tether; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the colour of the sky, as we call the void of space, from where it showed a reddish grey behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a pedlar, I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated, and became for a second the highest light in the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasseradès and the congregated night-caps; with

horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theatres and pass-keys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, not felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses seemed after all a gentle habitable place ; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists ; at the least, I had discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to lie near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even in solitude, which rightly understood is solitude made perfect.

27. WAR

(From *Little Essays*)

GEORGE SANTAYANA

To fight is a radical instinct ; if men have nothing else to fight over they will fight over words, fancies, or women, or they will fight because they dislike each other's looks, or because they have met walking in opposite directions. To knock a thing down, especially if it is cocked at an arrogant angle, is a deep delight to the blood. To fight for a reason and in a calculating spirit is something your true warrior despises ; even a coward might screw his courage up to such a reasonable conflict. The joy and glory of fighting lie in its pure spontaneity and consequent generosity ; you are not fighting for gain, but for sport and for victory. Victory, no doubt, has its fruits for the victor. If fighting were not a possible means of livelihood the bellicose instinct could never have established itself in any long-lived race. A few men can live on plunder, just as there is room in the world for some beasts of prey ; other men are reduced to living on industry, just as there are diligent bees, ants, and herbivorous kine. But victory need have no good fruits for the people whose army is victorious. That it sometimes does so is an ulterior and blessed circumstance hardly to be reckoned upon.

Since barbarism has its pleasures it naturally has its apologists. There are panegyrists of war who say that without a periodical bleeding a race decays and loses its manhood. Experience is directly opposed to this shameless assertion. It is war that wastes a nation's wealth, chokes its industries, kills its flower, narrows its sympathies, condemns it to be governed by adventurers, and leaves the puny, deformed, and unmanly to breed the next generation.

Internecine war, foreign and civil, brought about the greatest set-back which the life of reason has ever suffered; it exterminated the Greek and Italian aristocracies. Instead of being descended from heroes, modern nations are descended from slaves ; and it is not their bodies only that show it.

After a long peace, if the conditions of life are propitious, we observe a people's energies bursting their barriers ; they become aggressive on the strength they have stored up in their remote and unchecked development. It is the unmutilated race, fresh from the struggle with nature (in which the best survive, while in war it is often the best that perish), that descends victoriously into the arena of nations and conquers disciplined armies at the first blow, becomes the military aristocracy of the next epoch and is itself ultimately sapped and decimated by luxury and battle, and merged at last into the ignoble conglomerate beneath. Then, perhaps, in some other virgin country a genuine humanity is again found, capable of victory because unbled by war.

Blind courage is an animal virtue indispensable in a world full of dangers and evils where a certain insensibility and dash are requisite to skirt the precipice without vertigo. Such animal courage seems therefore beautiful rather than desperate or cruel, and being the lowest and most instinctive of virtues it is the one most widely and sincerely admired. In the form of steadiness under risks rationally taken, and in perseverance so long as there is a chance of success, courage is a true virtue, but it ceases to be one when the love of danger, a useful passion when danger is unavoidable, begins to lead men into evils which it was unnecessary to face.

Bravado, provocativeness, and a gambler's instinct, with a love of hitting hard for the sake of exercise, is a temper which ought already to be counted among the vices rather than the virtues of man. To delight in war is a merit in the soldier, a dangerous quality in the captain, and a positive crime in the statesman.

The panegyrist of war places himself on the lowest level on which a moralist or a patriot can stand and shows as great a want of refined feeling as of right reason. For the glories of war are all blood-stained, delirious, and infected with crime; the combative instinct is a savage prompting by which one man's good is found in another's evil. The existence of such a contradiction in the moral world is the original sin of nature whence flows every other wrong. He is a willing accomplice of that perversity in things who delights in another's discomfiture or in his own, and craves the blind tension of plunging into danger without reason, or the idiot's pleasure in

facing a pure chance. To find joy in another's trouble is, as man is constituted, not unnatural, though it is wicked ; and to find joy in one's own trouble, though it be madness, is not yet impossible for man. These are the chaotic depths of that dreaming nature out of which humanity has to grow.

28A. GOING AWAY AND ARRIVING

(From *Letters from Solitude*)

FILSON YOUNG

THE act of Going Away, in the case of a whole family making an annual migration, is a very important part of a holiday. In the case of simple people who have neither great establishments or large means, it is a thing fraught with a certain amount of careful apprehension; to the elders it is a serious matter, complicated by questions of packing, of dealings with servants, or arrangements for shutting up or carefully maintaining the house during their absence; but for children it is quite another thing. It is the most exciting part of the holiday, in which the joys of travel and adventure are combined in a highly concentrated form. It is surrounded by rites and ceremonies, and crowned with the knowledge that beyond it lie the delights of the holiday itself. To appreciate the true joys of Going Away one must be a child in a family whose annual migration is a thing long looked forward to as the supreme delight of the year.

My own memory of Going Away in this manner lies like a golden haze on the most distant part of life that I can remember. I associate it with that sense of exhausted summer experienced in large towns towards the end of July; with an approaching emptiness and suspension of the ordinary affairs of life, and with the alien's sense of

quitting the place of his bondage and returning to his native land. For England, although the greater part of my year was spent in it, was associated in my youth with the drab side of life ; with going to school and with a disagreeable sense of false position caused by living constantly among rich and, if the truth be told, somewhat Philistine people, whose simple way it was to estimate others by the amount of money which they had ; whom superiority of attainment or of cultivation rendered uncomfortable, and who were glad to find any ground from which they could look down on their superiors. And as the end of July approached we, as children, had a growing sense that we had dwelt too long in Mesech and had our habitation in the tents of Kedar. We were going back to our land and our own people, and we were glad.

Our Going Away took place very properly on a Monday. The Saturday preceding it was a day of disturbance and unrest, when the ordinary order of things was suspended, and one was thrilled by the sight of the various large trunks standing about in the fairways of corridors and landings. It was on Saturday, or sometimes even on Friday, that we began to repeat a rhyme or chant used only on these occasions. It was as follows :

This time three days where shall we be?

In the steamer going to——.

The missing word supplied the rhyme ; and it was considered creditable and effective if one of us, by making elaborate calculation, could suddenly foreshadow one of the more thrilling moments of the journey by saying :

This time twenty-five hours where shall we be?

Standing-on-the-quay-waiting-for-the-mail-car, going to—.

Saturday evening passed in a kind of wretched reaction and serious searching of heart as to how the whole of Sunday and Monday could possibly be got through. Church on Sunday was a little exciting because of the thinned condition of the congregation; one had an infinite pity for the wretched handful who should remain at the mercy of a succession of casual and unknown ministrants. All packing was of course suspended on Sunday, the trunks gaped invitingly, and sometimes a toy would be surreptitiously inserted among the folds of garments, only to be discovered and ejected on the following day. On Sunday evening there was a touching and somewhat sentimental feeling in the air, stimulated by the long sunshine slanting in through the windows, my father's last sermon, the familiar hymns dedicated by custom to this occasion and (in one mind at least) associated not with the Deity, but with cabs and railway trains. One could almost have wept. And so to bed, and another sick night of suspense.

We did not leave till about seven in the evening; but for my part I was always ready and waiting to get into my overcoat by about nine in the morning. Things really began to happen in the morning. Our excitement was constantly being quelled by elders who walked about with furrowed brows and attempted to keep calm. Servants were engaged upon unfamiliar jobs, and we took our meals with our loins girded, noting an absence of familiar table furniture. Various humble dependants came to the—

house to be paid, and as we spoke to them of our imminent departure we were filled, I know not why, with a sense of pathos. We felt sorry for them, that they should thus be looking on us for the last time ; and we had a strange thrilling sense of importance, as of people who should claim the attention and the privileges of the death-bed. As the afternoon wore on there was a difficulty in breathing and total loss of appetite, which, strange to say, was treated almost as an offence. The moment when the first trunk was brought downstairs was generally the scene of a demonstration and, probably, of a reprimand ; and it was at this time that agonised secret discussions began as to how we should sit in the 'bus, who, if any, should go on the box, whether it would be a fine night, and if we should be allowed to stay up late on the steamer. Half an hour before the time of departure the hideous chill of apprehension arose as to what would happen if the 'bus did not come, and the scout detailed to station himself on the road scanning every vehicle, received one bitter disappointment after another. But at last it arrived, being greeted, according to ritual, with a quotation from an early story-book. " It comes, it rolls up to the door."

Now indeed we were in the very act and article of departure. One could have embraced the driver as he came to help down with the boxes ; we wanted to draw him aside and tell him about the joys that were waiting for us ; for surely he must be aware that this was no ordinary station job, but the homeward flight of remarkable people to the most wonderful paradise on earth. This was one of the occasions on which one shook hands

with servants, and was strangely aware of the texture of their skin. And at last, every parcel being counted, and every child tightly clinging to some minor piece of luggage, the door was shut with a bang, the wheels scraped the road, and we were off, hoping to pass on the road some of our acquaintances who were not going away.

Followed the more awful excitement of the railway station, when we were brigaded into various parties and given posts to guard while the business of taking tickets and seats was transacted. There was no play about it now; we were off in earnest amid the grim realities of trains and engines; and our excitement took an almost fearful thrill, as though we had started some tremendous machine which we could not stop. The great delight of the railway journey was the obvious light-heartedness of my father; his method of counting the luggage to see that it was all there; the tones in which he announced the stations which were passed, which would not have seemed real if anyone else had spoken them; and it was part of the ritual, all unknown to him, that as we approached our port of embarkation he should let down the window and make some remark on the state of the weather or the sea. For a more sober interest now began to overcast our excitements; we were not all good sailors; and on the state of the weather would depend our happiness or misery for the next eight hours. But I remember these occasions chiefly as being associated with calm weather, and long sunsets, and the faint, salt smell of the sea across the darkness.

The next thrill on the pilgrimage was when, disembarking from the train and beginning to tramp through a succession of echoing boarded passages, we first caught sight of the legend in huge letters: TO THE STEAMER. I do not know why such notices should enter so deeply into one's sense of life; but so long as I live I shall remember the almost intolerable tremor of being with which I read these legends, and with what a sense of glorious fate I followed the pointing wooden hand with which they were punctuated. And then at last the gangway, and the deck of the steamer, and the lights shining from the companion-way, and the weird smell which made one clench one's teeth as one descended the stairs (for this was before the day of universal electric lights and fans), the finding of one's cabin and the depositing therein of one's small effects, the desire to be in every part of the ship at once lest one should miss anything, the glorious vibration of the foghorn's note in the pit of one's stomach when it announced our departure, and the moment at which one could say, "We are off". And then the tramping up and down the deck, the watching of the winking buoys sliding by, the returning to peep down the companion ladder, and the coming back to find that one's teeth were still firmly clenched. Every one of these experiences was a joy in itself. And down in the saloon was a pleasant clatter of knives and forks, and the appetising smells of hot meats, after which my young stomach lusted, although I was obliged to be content with an expurgated meal of tea and toast and jam.

And then once more on deck, we men, tightly buttoned

up now, one's mother and sisters safely tucked away in their cabins whence good and reassuring news came of their estate, to walk up and down in the lee of the most interesting, fascinating, and all-powerful father in holiday mood, looking at the blinking lighthouse that seemed to come no nearer, until the wind began to bite and the eyes, in spite of all efforts of the will, to close. To turn in was delayed as long as possible, for it meant the end of Going Away ; there was but a bridge of sleep before one would enter into to-morrow with all its joys.

But if Going Away was the most glorious part of the holidays of childhood, Arriving was the most purely joyous. The excitement of Going Away was tinged with the apprehension which, pleasant or unpleasant, is inseparable from the beginning of any great enterprise, and was shadowed by a sense of perils and adventures by land and sea to be encountered before the end was reached. But on arriving these things were all behind us ; it was a crescendo of pleasures ; they did not end, but were simply merged in a succession of joys, a vista of delight of which even the visible horizon did not mark the end. In short, Going Away happened at night, and Arriving happened in the morning ; and in that statement is contained the whole essential difference between the two.

Arriving began by one's waking up in the small hours of the morning, and wondering where one was, and gradually becoming aware that one was indeed in the cabin of the ship and travelling in the midst of the sea. The great question was how soon one could get up. The view from the porthole probably revealed only a grey

waste of waters. One hardly dared to look at the time for fear it should be some dreadful hour like three or four o'clock—a hopeless hour at which it was quite useless to get up. One lay trying to go to sleep again, or, failing that, determined to lie still for an hour by sheer effort of will : and when one looked at the clock again it was but five minutes later. Sometimes one would try to persuade oneself that four o'clock was quite a reasonable hour to get up, and having dressed find one's way up on decks that were either deserted and very wet, or else in process of being washed down so that there was no dry spot to sit upon. No land being visible, and the air being probably bitterly cold, and the sun not risen, the most sanguine temperament failed to support such conditions, and one would come down again and make another effort to sleep, repeating these experiments until one did sleep in earnest, and wake up with a shock to find that the green shores of Ireland were visible, that the sun had risen, and that other people had been up for quite a long time. How sweet the air was, how green seemed the familiar shores of one's native land! There were greetings to be exchanged, notes to be compared on the experiences of the night, absorbing interests connected with the arrival of the steamer alongside the quay and—joy of joys—the sight of the yellow wheels of the conveyance which was to carry us on the last thirty miles of our journey. This was nothing more *nor* less than a long car, a kind of vehicle unknown except in Ireland and, in sober truth, nothing more luxurious than a species of spring dray with wooden flaps over the wheels and a kind

of knife-board arrangement on which four or six people sat facing outwards on either side, the luggage being piled in the middle. But the fiery chariot of Elijah could not have seemed to us a more delectable and luxurious and splendid conveyance.

And now we were all packed and tucked in behind rugs and aprons, and rattling over the stony streets of the town and out into the country road, with the morning sunshine slanting still low across it, and the air still sweet from the dews and the showers of the night, and the hedgerows fragrant and bright with wild roses and dog-daisies. We had thirty miles to cover, with changes of horses three times, and the joy of the road before us. The first thing I remember when once well out on the road was the production of baskets and packets of biscuits and sandwiches ; and my strongest association with this part of the road is the slightly metallic taste of the milk drunk out of the cup of a flask, and the difficulty of imbibing it from the narrow end of the cup while seated on a jolting vehicle. And after that I think I generally slept or dozed for about an hour ; dozed deliciously, leaning against some protecting shoulder with an undercurrent of the gritty sound of wheels along the road, of Irish voices heard in pauses by the roadside.

Half-way along, the road, just after it passes through the town of Newtownards, takes a sudden bend and comes out on one of the most fragrant shores in the world. One moment you are under trees, going by a moss-grown chapel and market-house, and the next you are out in the open with a stony beach close to you, the intoxicating

smell of seaweed, and the sound of waves washing against stones—no muddy lakewater, but the veritable sea itself, clear and green and transparent against the rocks and pebbles of the beach. Need I tell you what the moment of that vision meant to us in this succession of delights? For these were our own waters, the shores of our own lough, which we were to follow in all their twistings and turnings for some fifteen miles, and well-nigh to the open sea itself. Great was the competition to sit on the shore side of the car ; so great indeed that turns had to be taken, and at stopping-places there was much lifting down and hoisting up as these exchanges were effected.

Two more changes of horses after this, and we were out on the last ten miles, mostly inland again, for we were to lose sight of the sea until it burst upon us at the very doors of our home. Now the excitement became almost sickening as we strained our eyes along the road to mark the familiar objects ; and as we neared the village of our destination familiar faces began to appear on the road, and we recognised them with a thrill of wonder that they should exist so unchanged during our absence. Now began the long wall of the demesne, with a curtsying figure at the first lodge gate ; and at the end of the wall, under a tunnel of trees, the pump and the first white cottages of the long village street. The horses were whipped up, and with a glorious commotion we entered on the last stage of our triumphal progress. The upper halves of the house doors were opened, and old women with mutches on their heads looked out upon us, shading

their eyes with their hands. Now we have passed the baker's, that functionary himself, perpetually white, and living, as it were, in a mist of flour, standing behind his counter ; now past the wonderful shop of sweets and mysteries, with the name " Anderson " in crusted white letters (one of them missing) over the lintel ; now another shop, the source of the most delicious gingerbread, with its little proprietress nodding and waving to us from the door ; now with a last crack of the whip, and scattering of poultry from under the very wheels, into the market square itself, in front of the post-office, with familiar faces waiting to greet us. But even yet we had not finished ; the greater joy was to come. The mails had been taken off, the parcels and odd luggage discharged and with a grating of brakes we turn away down the steep street, where the masts of ships show over the roofs of houses, round the corner, beside the pump, along the wall of an old castle, and suddenly the view is open—to me the most sacred and beautiful view in the world ; a view of the beach and harbour and sea, with our own craft at her moorings in the foreground, and the swift sliding tide beyond, and across it green wooded shores trimmed with a brown line of seaweed, and the blue mountains in the distance.

That was the culmination ; but a few yards more and the wheels had come to rest, and we jumped down on to the gravel sweep into the arms waiting to receive us. Yet it was not the beloved kinsfolk whose presence and welcome most thrilled us, but the sturdy, bearded, blue-jerseyed figure, commodore and admiral of our small fleet

of boats, who stood waiting to take part in the welcome, and, incidentally, to help with the luggage. That he should be really alive and existing before us in the very flesh was the crowning miracle and delight of our journey. When we had found him we had Arrived.

28B. IN THE DESERT

(From *Eotben*)

KINGLAKE

GAZA stands upon the verge of the desert, and bears towards it the same kind of relation as a seaport bears to the sea. It is there that you charter your camels ("the ships of the Desert") and lay in your stores for the voyage.

These preparations kept me in the town for some days. Disliking restraint, I declined making myself the guest of the governor (as it is usual and proper to do), but took up my quarters at the caravanserai or "khan" as they call it in that part of Asia.

In a couple of days I was ready to start. The way of providing for the passage of the Desert is this : there is an agent in the town who keeps himself in communication with some of the Desert Arabs that are hovering within a day's journey of the place ; a party of these, upon being guaranteed against seizure or other ill treatment at the hands of the governor, come into the town, bringing with them the number of camels which you require, and then they stipulate for a certain sum to take you to the place of your destination in a given time. The agreement thus made by them includes a safe-conduct through their country, as well as the hire of the camels. According to

the contract made with me, I was to reach Cairo within ten days from the commencement of the journey.

As long as you are journeying in the interior of the desert you have no particular point to make for as your resting place. The endless sands yield nothing but small stunted shrubs ; even these fail after the first two or three days, and from that time, you pass over broad plains—you pass over newly-reared hills—you pass through valleys dug out by the last week's storm—and the hills and the valleys are sand, sand, sand, still sand, and only sand, and sand, and sand again. The earth is so samely that your eyes turn towards heaven—towards heaven, I mean, in sense of sky. You look to the sun, for he is your taskmaster, and by him you know the measure of the work that you have done, and the measure of the work that remains for you to do. He comes when you strike your tent in the early morning, and then, for the first hour of the day, as you move forward on your camel, he stands at your near side, and makes you know that the whole day's toil is before you ; then for a while, and a long while, you see him no more, for you are veiled and shrouded, and dare not look upon the greatness of his glory, but you know where he strides overhead by the touch of his flaming sword. No words are spoken, but your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, your skin glows, your shoulders ache, and for sights you see the pattern and the web of the silk that veils your eyes and the glare of the outer light. Time labours on—your skin glows, your shoulders ache, your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, and you see the same pattern in the silk, and the same glare of

light beyond ; but conquering time marches on, and by and by the descending sun has compassed the heavens, and now softly touches your right arm and throws your lank shadow over the sand right along on the way for Persia. Then again you look upon his face, for his power is all veiled in his beauty, and the redness of flames has become the redness of roses ; the fair wavy cloud that fled in the morning now comes to his sight once more—comes blushing, yet still comes on—comes burning with blushes, yet comes and clings to his side.

Then begins your season of rest. The world about you is all your own, and there, where you will, you pitch your solitary tent ; there is no living thing to dispute your choice. When at last the spot has been fixed upon and we come to a halt, one of the Arabs would touch the chest of my camel and utter at the same time a peculiar gurgling sound. The beast instantly understood and obeyed the sign, and slowly sank under me, till she brought her body to a level with the ground : then gladly enough I alighted. The rest of the camels were unloaded and turned loose to browse upon the shrubs of the Desert, where shrubs there were ; or where these failed, to wait for the small quantity of food that was allowed them out of our stores.

29. THE PORT

(From *Apes and Angels*)

J. B. PRIESTLEY

THIS morning I went down to the docks with my friend, the marine surveyor. He had a ship, now in dry dock, to look over, the first for many weeks. There have been very few ships, whole or damaged, in this port these many months, and as we walked down towards the docks, my friend talked of old days that would never return with any tide. A vast fleet had sailed away from this port for ever. My friend is not young and, like all his kind, he turns no rosy spectacles on the future. He is not sentimental about the past and, like all the men I have ever met who have had to do with the sea, he cannot be sentimental about the future. He has the usual close conservative grain of his type, and possibly he exaggerates the evils of to-day and the peril of to-morrow, but it was impossible, to keep in step with him and following his pointing finger, not to feel that something was passing from these seas. He kept lightly and realistically to the facts, the actual substance of the scene around us, and it was left for me, romantic, sentimental, literary, to make what I could of it. Perhaps the morning artfully evoked the mood. It was bright enough, a good day for late November, with a sun to feel and see, faintly caressing

your shoulders. But it was all so quiet, so dim. There was a mist trailing through the town, and a white fog down the Channel. Beneath the bright upper air, the distant things were the merest wraiths and everything close at hand was hushed and faintly shining, a place in a dream. Now and then, but so rarely as to be startling, a siren would shatter the silence, coming from nowhere and leaving behind only a deeper quiet in which there was a faint irony, an irony of ghosts. Someone was calling the rolls of ships, it seemed, and only these were answering.

We passed through the notorious quarter where the seamen's lodgings are, and as we walked along my friend told me stories of that place. He told them with that unconscious air of pride which very respectable citizens cannot escape if they describe to you the depravity of their city. This morning, however, the quarter looked innocent enough, merely so many streets of dingy little houses, with an outlandish name, an Ahmed or Chung Soo, here and there, an occasional lascar or heavily muffled negro standing at a corner, and some half caste women cleaning their doorsteps. It seemed curiously vacant, lifeless. Perhaps most of them were asleep, though the morning was wearing away. Perhaps there were only a handful of sailors in all these lodging-houses, and Ahmed and the rest were still waiting for company. It looked as if some of them would have to wait for ever. Yet when we came out, passed the chandlers' and gaudy tobacconists' shops, and arrived at the dingy Board of Trade Offices, there seemed to be people enough. The

square there, muddy and raw, was filled with idlers, standing about in little groups and hardly making a movement. They were listless, drab, silent. I had a feeling that they were all waiting for something to happen, and yet knew that nothing would happen. What vile places these parts would be if it were not for the fact that they are on the very border of magic! Somewhere beyond this weary tangle of railway lines and little bridges and sheds is radiant fantasy, emerald water and great scarlet birds and a glimpse of Pernambuco or Yucatan. You go this way, where our grime seems thickest, cross your last plank, and when next you tread on land, the cockatoos are screaming round you and a black man is slashing at a green coconut so that you may slake your thirst. As exits these ports are endurable, but what foul entrances they must make! Who, coming from the sea to England, would imagine that they too lead back to a fantasy, lovelier and more subtle, the witchery of hawthorn and meadow that is ours?

We made our way to the dry dock where my companion had to inspect his ship. She was from Ireland and had ripped some of her plates on the way over. There she was, high and dry, with a little army of pygmies tinkering at her. Here indeed was a most heartening noise and bustle——

It was odd to tread the decks of a ship and look down to see no water but a dry floor and a host of men at work there, to smell the carbide from the acetylene welders below and to hear such a clanging and hammering that it seemed as if the whole ship were being knocked to pieces.

It was odd, too, to go down there and watch the goggled men directing their awful flames and turning iron rivets into so many showers of sparks and liquid golden drops of metal, to look up at the vast curving hull of the ship and at the vast bronze propeller now forlorn in mid-air. What a good solid job of work this mending of ships is, making most of our tasks seem mere hocus-pocus!

Here and there a ship showed itself through the light mist that covered the docks, but the great basins, faintly shining, dreamlike, seemed sadly vacant. Not long ago, I was told, all those docks were crowded with shipping, were a maze of derricks and smoke-stacks, but now not only was there room enough and to spare, but there was desolating vacancy. The rails were empty of trains, and we could stroll at ease over all the bridges, their "Keep to the Left" notices being now simply farcical. There was no traffic over them. No lorries came clattering through, no crowds of men rushed over them towards the town or the waiting boats. The great cranes or chutes were all motionless, as if they forlornly sniffed the raw, empty air, monsters awaiting a prey that never came. We left the docks, passed once more through the little square where the Board of Trade and the idlers stared at one another, and came at last to a great block of shipping offices, the tallest building in the neighbourhood. "I'll take you up to the roof," my companion said, pointing the way to the lift. "You get a good view up there." It was a flat roof, high above the surrounding chimney-pots, boasting of nothing but a tiny green-house, where the gardener had his aerial garden. But beyond the im-

mediate tangle of roofs and gloom of narrow streets, there was nothing to be seen. The hills were completely lost in the thickening mist. Not a glimmer of the Channel came through the fog. The docks were fading out, and the nearest were only the faintest shadow. "You've been unlucky," I was told, "for any kind of clear day would have shown us everything." I promised that I would return and see it all: the Channel, shining and brave with shipping; the docks alive with moving derricks; the air resounding with sirens and locomotive whistles and the shouts of busy men. But I could not help wondering whether I ever should, whether something had not gone for ever. I remember a solitary hooting, like a knell, as we quitted the roof, and how cheerful the smoking cafe seemed, with its smell of hot coffee, its tobacco smoke, its clatter of tongues and dominoes. There we had a good talk about the East India Company.

30A. THE FARM-YARD

(From *The Thread of Gold*)

A. C. BENSON

THERE is a big farm-yard close to the house where I am staying just now ; it is a constant pleasure, as I pass that way, to stop and watch the manners and customs of the beasts and birds that inhabit it ; I am ashamed to think how much time I spend in hanging over a gate, to watch the little dramas of the byre. I am not sure that pigs are an altogether satisfactory subject of contemplation. They always seem to me like a fallen race that has seen better days. They are able, intellectual inquisitive creatures. When they are driven from place to place, they are not gentle or meek, like cows and sheep, who follow the line of least resistance. The pig is suspicious and cautious ; he is sure that there is some uncomfortable plot on foot, not wholly for his good, which he must try to thwart if he can. Then, too, he never seems quite at home in his deplorably filthy surroundings ; he looks at you, up to the knees in ooze, out of his little eyes, as if he would live in a more cleanly way, if he were permitted. Pigs always remind me of the mariners of Homer, who were transformed by Circe ; there is a dreadful humanity about them, as if they were trying to endure their

base conditions philosophically, waiting for their release.

But cows bring a deep tranquillity into the spirit ; their glossy skins, their fragrant breath, their contented ease, their mild gaze, their Epicurean rumination tend to restore the balance of the mind, and make one feel that vegetarianism must be a desirable thing. There is the dignity of innocence about the cow, and I often wish that she did not bear so poor a name, a word so unsuitable for poetry ; it is lamentable that one has to take refuge in the archaism of " kinè ", when the thing itself is so gentle and pleasant.

But the true joy of the farm-yard is, undoubtedly, in the domestic fowls. It is long since I was frightened of turkeys ; but I confess that there is still something awe-inspiring about an old turkey-cock, with a proud and angry eye, holding his breath till his wattles are blue and swollen, with his fan extended, like a galleon in full sail, his wings held stiffly down, strutting a few rapid steps, and then slowly revolving, like a king in royal robes. There is something tremendous about his supremacy, his almost intolerable pride and glory.

And then we come to cocks and hens. The farm-yard cock is an incredibly grotesque creature. His furious eye, his blood-red crest, make him look as if he were seeking whôm he might devour. But he is the most craven of creatures. In spite of his air of just anger, he has no dignity whatever. To hear him raise his voice, you would think that he was challenging the whole world to combat. He screams defiance, and when he

has done, he looks round with an air of satisfaction. "There! that is what you have to expect if you interfere with me!" he seems to say. But an alarm is given; the poultry seek refuge in a hurried flight. Where is the champion? You would expect to see him guarding the rear, menacing his pursuer; but no, he has headed the flight, he is far away, leading the van with a desperate intentness.

This morning I was watching the behaviour of a party of fowls, who were sitting together on a dusty ledge above the road, sheltering from the wind. I do not know whether they meant to be as humorous as they were, but I can hardly think they were not amused at each other. They stood and lay very close together, with fierce glances, and quick, jerky motions of the head. Now and then one, tired of inaction, raised a deliberate claw, bowed its head, scratched with incredible rapidity, shook its tumbled feathers, and looked round with angry self-consciousness, as though to say: "I will ask anyone to think me absurd at his peril." Now and then one of them kicked diligently at the soil, and then, turning round, scrutinised the place intently, and picked delicately at some minute object. One examined the neck of her neighbour with fixed stare, and then pecked the spot sharply. One settled down on the dust, and gave a few vigorous strokes with her legs to make herself more comfortable. Occasionally they all crooned and wailed together, and at the passing of a cart all stood up defiantly, as if intending to hold their fort at all hazards. Presently a woman came out of a house-door opposite, at which

the whole party ran furiously and breathlessly across the road, as if their lives depended upon arriving in time. There was not a gesture or a motion that was not admirably conceived, intensely dramatic.

Again, what is more delightfully absurd than to see a hen find a large morsel which she cannot deal with at one gulp? She has no sense of diplomacy or cunning; her friends, attracted by her motions, close in about her; she picks up the treasured provender, she runs, bewildered with anxiety, till she has distanced her pursuers; she puts the object down and takes a couple of desperate pecks; but her kin are at her heels; another flight follows, another wild attempt; for half an hour the same tactics are pursued. At last she is at bay; she makes one prodigious effort, and gets the treasure down with a convulsive swallow; you see her neck bulge with the moving object; while she looks at her baffled companions with an air of meek triumph.

Ducks, too, afford many simple joys to the contemplative mind. A slow procession of white ducks, walking delicately, with heads lifted high and timid eyes, in a long line, has the air of an ecclesiastical procession. The singers go before, the minstrels follow after. There is something liturgical, too, in the way in which, as if by a preconcerted signal, they all cry out together, standing in a group, with a burst of hoarse cheering, cut off suddenly by an intolerable silence. The arrival of ducks upon the scene, when the fowls are fed, is an impressive sight. They stamp wildly over the pasture, falling, stumbling, rising again, arrive on the scene with a

desperate intentness and eat as though they had not seen food for months.

The pleasure of these farm-yard sights is two-fold. It is partly the sense of grave, unconscious importance about the whole business, serious lives lived with such whole-hearted zeal. There is no sense of divided endeavour; the discovery of food is the one thing in the world, and the sense of repletion is also the sense of virtue. But there is something pathetic too, about the taming to our own ends of these forest beasts, these woodland birds; they are so unconscious of the sad reasons for which we desire their company, so unsuspecting, so serene! Instead of learning by the sorrowful experience of generations what our dark purposes are, they become more and more fraternal, more and more dependent. And yet how little we really know what their thoughts are, They are so unintelligent in some regions, so subtly wise in others. We cannot share our thoughts with them; we cannot explain anything to them. We can sympathise with them in their troubles, but cannot convey our sympathy to them. There is a little bantam hen here, a great pet, who comes up to the front door with the other bantams to be fed. She has been suffering for some time from an obscure illness. She arrives with the others, full of excitement, and begins to pick at the grain thrown them; but the effort soon exhausts her; she goes sadly apart, and sits with dim eye and ruffled plumage, in silent suffering, wondering, perhaps, why she is not as brisk and joyful as ever, what is the sad thing that has befallen her. And one can do nothing,

express nothing of the pathetic sorrow that fills one's mind. But, none the less, one tries to believe, to feel, that this suffering is not fortuitous, is not wasted—how could one endure the thought otherwise, if one did not hope that “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God”!

30B. THE KITTEN

(From *The Green Man*)

ROBERT LYND ("Y. Y.")

EVERY wise man loves his own cat, but even the foolish love other people's kittens. All the cats that one has loved best have been full-grown—they have been animals whose careers one has followed almost from the cradle to the grave—and yet one feels a temporary affection for any kitten in the world as it scurries under the sofa, protrudes a questing head from beneath the valance as though the room were an unexplored African jungle, reaches out a paw and withdraws suddenly into the darkness, throws itself on its back and engages in a sham fight with the valance, and, righting itself, bolts with demons pursuing it to the folds of the curtain at the window. Most of our affections are the result of long associations, but every one who sees a kitten falls in love at first sight. I suppose we are sentimental in our attitude to all young animals—foals, calves, pigs a month old, chickens, and ducklings. Even the psycho-analysts cannot persuade us that these pretty neophytes are as gross and dull as the elders of their species. A pig has at least a few weeks of innocence before it becomes a pig in the full sense of the word, and if a chicken is not pure, then there is nothing pure on earth. At the same time,

I think our affection for kittens is based on something also besides that vague sentiment of kindliness we all feel in the presence of infancy and innocence. I am as fond of chickens as anyone, but there is a monotony in their behaviour that makes it impossible to watch them with interest for more than a short period. I am a sworn admirer of calves, but calves, despite the menus in the restaurants, have no brains and lack initiative. Every kitten, almost as soon as it has emerged from the primal darkness, becomes (save at meal hours) an independent being, able to amuse itself like a child, inventive, adventurous, eager.

It is the only animal that enjoys looking at things for the sheer pleasure of seeing them moving. Dangle a string before the eyes of a duckling, and, if there is no food at the end of it, it will show no interest. Throw a paper ball along the ground in the presence of a young pig, and it will find it duller than "Euphues". A puppy, to be sure, will run after a ball, but I do not think either a foal or a calf will, and even a puppy lacks the all-embracing curiosity of a kitten. A kitten alone among the animals enjoys the use of its eyes to the full. Take it into the garden and it starts with excitement at the shadow of a cabbage-butterfly passing over the grass. The rose-leaf stirring in the wind after the rain draws it like a magnet, and it approaches it stealthily, its eyes a-glitter with interest, and touches it tentatively with its paw, as though every thing that moved must be investigated. It creeps among the godetias flattened by the rain, and, as each plant with the removal of its foot jumps upwards

and swings like a pendulum, the kitten stays to look and wonder and perhaps to box timorously the vacillating flower. It cannot move a step in the garden without seeing something else moving—a privet-leaf, a blade of grass, a bird on the railings. If it settles down to sleep on the flagged path, an ant appears out of the crack and hurries earnestly on its errand, and the kitten sits up, with its ears forward and its head cocked sideways, studying the moving apparition, approaching it with a careful paw, backing from the ant as it returns as from an incoming tide, following the ant cautiously till it has reached the crack and putting its foot quickly on the crack as the ant disappears, raising its foot hurriedly from the crack as the ant re-emerges and never taking its eyes off the insect till it sees its mother's tail moving and stalks *this as a still better plaything. In a few months it will be only* a cat, and will no longer be interested in the traffic of ants, refusing to bestir itself for anything smaller than a moth. To-day, even an ant is something that moves and is therefore worth looking at. It is a point of view that kittens share with the wisest—or, at least, the happiest—of mankind. . . .

31. HOLIDAYS

(From *The Right Place*)

C. E. MONTAGUE

CHILDREN are often too tired to sleep, and the worst thing about overwork is the way it may make you unfit for a holiday. You may be left able only to stand still and blink, like used-up horses when put out to grass, while the man who has worked in reason, and worried no more than he should, is off for the day or the month, to plunge into some kind of work not his own, just for the fun of the thing.

For all the best sport is the doing, for once, of somebody else's work. The wise cashier puts in a spell of steady exertion as a gardener. Statesmen, prelates and judges of appeal come as near as they can to fulfilling the functions of good professional golfers, fishermen or chauffeurs. The master minds who run our railways for us may seem to flee the very sight of the permanent way ; but they don ruck-sacks for ten-hour tramps over rock, peat and bracken, such as the lighter kind of porters used to take for their living in the days before steam. The new-made husband and head of a house, released from his desk in a public office, will labour absorbedly from morning until dewy eve to put the attic in order or get the whole of the tool-shed painted while yet it is light,

proud and happy as Pepys when after a day of such application he put the glorious result down in his diary, adding—lest pride should grow sinful—“Pray God my mind run not too much upon it.”

Is it, then, mere change of work that makes the best holiday? Scarcely. The master cotton-spinner would not find it sport to spend his August ruling a dye-works. There is no rush of civil service clerks for a month's diversion, each year, among the ledgers of joint stock banks in the city. A doubtful legend, as we all know, reports that if ever one of the old London drivers of horsed 'buses had a holiday—and even this is uncertain—he spent it in driving his wife and himself out into the country in a small trap. Suppose it was true. Yet even then, mark you, a small trap of the period had only one horse. And that leads to the point. What most charms us as play is not merely some other kind of work than our own. It is some kind more elementary.

Man's job on the earth seems to be always becoming more intricate and advanced. Quite early he has to plunge on and on into deepening forests of complexity as his youth penetrates with uncertain feet the central wilds and dark places of algebra-books. The toughness of our task, as compared with that of a hen, is said to be roughly indicated by the contrast between the preparation required for each; the hen is fairly ripe for its labours the day it is born; a man is by no means always efficient after he has afforded employment to a cohort of nurses, governesses, schoolmasters, tutors and professors for more than a score of years. And so, as we proceed with this obscure

and intractable undertaking, we dearly like, on our days off, to turn back and do over again, for the fun and easiness of the thing, what we or others really had to do, for dear life, in the infancy of the race.

When Easter releases the child, in any provincial suburb, from his inveterate bondage to grammar and sums, you will see him refreshing himself with sportive revivals of one of the earliest anxieties of man.

Foraging around like a magpie or rook, he collects odd bits of castaway tarpaulin and sacking, dusters, odd petticoats, broken broom-sticks and fragments of corrugated iron. Assembling these building materials on some practicable patch of waste grass, preferably in the neighbourhood of water, he raises for himself a simple dwelling. The blessing of a small fire crowns these provisions for domestic felicity, and marvellous numbers of small persons may be seen sitting round these rude hearths, conversing with the gravity of Sioux chieftains or, at a menace of rain, packing themselves into incredibly small cubic spaces of wigwam.

32. THE ENGLISH PARK

(From *Letters from England*)

KAREL CAPEK

THE trees are perhaps the most beautiful things in England. Of course, the meadows and the policemen too, but chiefly the trees, splendidly broad-shouldered, ancient, generous, free, venerable, vast trees; trees of Hampton Court, Richmond Park, Windsor, and I know not where else besides. It is possible that these trees have a great influence on Toryism in England. I think they preserve the aristocratic instincts, the historical sense, Conservatism, tariffs, golf, the House of Lords, and other odd and antique things. I should probably be a rabid Radical if I lived in the Street of the Iron Balconies or in the Street of the Grey Bricks; but sitting under an ancient oak tree in the park at Hampton Court I was seriously tempted to acknowledge the value of old things, the high mission of old trees, the harmonious comprehensiveness of tradition, and the legitimacy of esteem for everything that is strong enough to preserve itself for ages.

It seems that in England there are many such ancient trees; in nearly everything that is met with here, in the clubs, in the literature, in the homes, you can somehow feel the timber and foliage of aged, venerable, and fear-

fully solid trees. As a matter of fact, nothing conspicuously new can be seen here—only the Tube is new, and perhaps that is why it is so ugly. But old trees and old things contain imps, eccentric and jocular sprites: the English also contain pixies. They are enormously solemn, solid and venerable; suddenly there is a sort of rumbling within them, they make a grotesque remark, a fork of pixie-like humour flies out of them, and once more they have the solemn appearance of an old leather armchair.

I do not know why, but this sober England strikes me as the most fairylike and romantic of all countries which I have seen. Perhaps this is on account of the old trees. Or no, it is perhaps the result of the greensward. It is because you walk here across the fields instead of upon footpaths. We Continental people do not venture to walk except on roads and paved paths; this certainly has a huge influence upon the development of our minds. When I saw the first gentleman strolling across the greensward in the park at Hampton Court, I imagined that he was a creature from fairyland, although he wore a top-hat; I expected that he would ride into Kingston upon a stag, or that he would begin to dance, or that the park-keeper would come up and give him a terrible wiggling. Nothing happened, and at last even I ventured to make my way straight across the grass to an old oak. Nothing happened! Never have I had a feeling of such unrestricted liberty as in that moment. It is very curious; here evidently man is not regarded as an obnoxious animal. Here the dismal tradition is not current that the

grass will not grow beneath his hoofs. Here he has the right to walk across the meadow as if he were a wood-nymph or a landed proprietor. I think that this has a considerable influence upon his character and view of the world. It opens up the marvellous possibility of walking elsewhere than along a road, without regarding oneself as a beast of prey, a footpad, or an anarchist.

All this I pondered about beneath an oak tree in the park at Hampton Court, but at least even old roots cause discomfort. Anyhow, I am sending you a picture of what an English park looks like. I wanted to draw a stag there as well, but I must admit that I cannot manage it from memory.

33. COLLECTING THINGS

(From *Yet Again*)

MAX BEERBOHM

My collection, like most collections, began imperceptibly. A man does not say to himself, "I am going to collect" this thing or that. True, the schoolboy says so; but his are not, in the true sense of the word, collections. He seeks no set of autobiographic symbols, for boys never look back—there is too little to look back on, too much in front. Nor have the objects of his collection any intrinsic charm for him. He starts a collection merely that he may have a plausible excuse for doing something he ought not to do. He goes in for birds' eggs merely that he may be allowed to risk his bones and tear his clothes in climbing; for butterflies, that he may be encouraged to poison and impale; for stamps . . . really, I do not know why he, why any sane creature, goes in for stamps. It follows that he has no real love of his collection, and he soon abandons it for something else. The sincere collector, how different. His hobby has a solid basis of personal preference. Some one gives him (say) a piece of jade. He admires it. He sees another piece in a shop, and buys it; later, he buys another. He does not regard these pieces of jade as distinct from the rest of his possessions; he has no idea of collecting jade. It is not

till he has acquired several other pieces that he ceases to regard them as mere items in the decoration of his room, and gives them a little table, or a tray of a cabinet, all to themselves. How well they look there! How they intensify one another! He really must get someone to give him that little pedestalled Cupid which he saw yesterday in Wardour Street. Thus awakes in him, quite gradually, the spirit of the collector. Or take the case of one whose collection is not of beautiful things, but of autobiographic symbols : take the case of the glutton. He will have pocketed many menus before it occurs to him to arrange them in an album. Even so, it was not till a fair number of labels had been pasted on my hat-box that I saw them as souvenirs, and determined that in future my hat-box should always travel with me and so commemorate my every daring escape.

In the path of every collector are strewn obstacles of one kind or another ; and the overleaping of them is part of the fun. As a collector of labels I had my pleasant difficulties. On any much-belabelled piece of baggage the porter always pastes the new label over that which looks most recent ; else the thing might miss its destination. Now, paste dries before the end of the briefest journey ; and one of my canons was that, though two labels might overlap, none must efface the inscription of another. On the other hand, I did not wish to lose my hat-box, for this would have entailed enquiries, and descriptions, and telegraphing up the line, and all manner of agitation. What, then, was I to do? I might have taken my hat-box with me in the carriage. That, indeed,

is what I always did. But unless a thing is to go in the van it receives no label at all. So I had to use a mild stratagem. "Yes," I would say, "everything in the van!" The labels would be duly affixed. "Oh," I would cry, seizing the hat-box quickly, "I forgot. I want this with me in the carriage." (I learnt to seize it quickly, because some porters are such martinets that they will whisk the label off and confiscate it.) Then, when the man was not looking, I would remove the label from the place he had chosen for it and press it on some unoccupied part of the surface. You cannot think how much I enjoyed the manoeuvres. There was the moral pleasure of having both outwitted a Railway Company and secured another specimen for my collection; and there was the physical pleasure of making a limp slip of paper stick to a hard surface—that simple pleasure which appeals to all of us and is, perhaps, the missing explanation of philately. Pressed for time, I could not, of course, have played my trick. Nor could I have done so—it would have seemed heartless—if anyone had come to see me off and be agitated at parting. Therefore, I was always very careful to arrive in good time for my train, and to insist that all farewells should be made on my own doorstep.

34. A BLIZZARD IN THE ALPS

(From *The Path to Rome*)

HILAIRE BELLOC

AT three o'clock the guide knocked at my door, and I rose and came out to him. We drank coffee and ate bread. We put into our sacks ham and bread, and he white wine and I brandy. Then we set out. The rain had dropped to a drizzle, and there was no wind. The sky was obscured for the most part, but here and there was a star. The hills hung awfully above us in the night as we crossed the spongy valley. A little wooden bridge took us over the young Rhone, here only a stream, and we followed a path up into the tributary ravine which leads to the Nufenen and the Gries. In a mile or two it was lighter, and this was as well, for some weeks before a great avalanche had fallen and we had to cross it gingerly. Beneath the wide gap of frozen snow ran a torrent roaring.

Then, most ominous and disturbing, the drizzle changed to a rain, and the guide shook his head and said it would be snowing higher up. We went on, and it grew lighter. Before it was really day (or else the weather confused and darkened the sky) we crossed a good bridge, built long ago, and we halted at a shed where the cattle lie in the late summer when the snow is melted. There we rested a moment.

But on leaving the shelter we noticed many disquieting things.

The guide said it could not be done, but I said we must attempt it. I was eager, and had not yet felt the awful grip of the cold. We left the Nufenen on our left, a hopeless steep of new snow buried in fog, and we attacked the Gries. For half an hour we plunged on through snow above our knees, and my thin cotton clothes were soaked. So far the guide knew we were more or less on the path, and he went on and I panted after him. Neither of us spoke but occasionally he looked back to make sure I had not dropped out.

The snow began to fall more thickly, and the wind had risen somewhat. I was afraid of another protest from the guide, but he stuck to it well, and I after him, continually plunging through soft snow and making yard after yard upwards. The snow fell more thickly and the wind still rose.

We came to a place which is, in the warm season, an alp; that is, a slope of grass, very steep but not terrifying; having here and there sharp little precipices of rock breaking it into steps, but by no means (in summer) a matter to make one draw back. Now, however, when everything was still Arctic it was a very different matter. A sheer steep of snow whose downward plunge ran into the driving storm and was lost, whose head was lost in the same mass of thick cloud above, a slope somewhat hollowed and bent inwards, had to be crossed if we were to go any farther; and I was terrified, for I knew nothing of climbing. The guide said there was little danger, only

if one slipped one might slide down to safety, or one might (much less probably) get over rocks and be killed. I was chattering a little with cold ; but as he did not propose a return, I followed him. The surface was alternately slabs of frozen snow and patches of soft new snow. In the first he cut steps, in the second we plunged and once I went right in and a mass of snow broke off beneath me and went careering down the slope. He showed me how to hold my staff backwards as he did his alpenstock, and use it as a kind of brake in case I slipped.

We had been about twenty minutes crawling over that wall of snow and ice ; and it was more and more apparent that we were in for danger. Before we had quite reached the far side, the wind was blowing a very full gale and roared past our ears. The surface snow was whirring furiously like dust before it ; past our faces and against them drove the snowflakes, cutting the air ; not falling, but making straight darts and streaks. They seemed like the form of the whistling wind ; they blinded us. The rocks on the side of the slope, rocks which had been our goal when we set out to cross it, had long ago disappeared in the increasing rush of the blizzard. Suddenly as we were still painfully moving on, stooping against the mad wind, these rocks loomed up over as large as houses, and we saw them through the swarming snowflakes as great hulls are seen through a fog at sea. The guide crouched under the lee of the nearest ; I came up close to him and he put his hands to my ear and shouted to me that nothing further could be done—he had so to shout because in

among the rocks the hurricane made a roaring sound, swamping the voice.

I asked how far we were from the summit. He said he did not know where we were exactly, but that we could not be more than 800 feet from it. I was but that from Italy and I would not admit defeat. I offered him all I had in money to go on, but it was folly in me, because if I had had enough to tempt him and if he had yielded we should both have died. Luckily it was but a little sum. He shook his head. He would not go on, he broke out, for all the money there was in the world. He shouted me to eat and drink, and so we both did.

Then I understood his wisdom, for in a little while the cold began to seize me in my thin clothes. My hands were numb, my face already gave me intolerable pain, and my legs suffered and felt heavy. I learnt another thing (which had I been used to mountains I should have known), that it was not a simple thing to return. The guide was hesitating whether to stay in this rough shelter, or to face the chances of the descent. The terror had not crossed my mind and I thought as little of it as I could, needing my courage, and being near to breaking down from the intensity of the cold.

It seems that in a "tourmente" (for by that excellent name do the mountain people call such a storm) it is always a matter of doubt whether to halt or to go back. If you go back through it and lose your way you are done for. If you halt in some shelter, it may go on for two or three days, and then there is an end of you.

After a little he decided for a return, but he told me

honestly what the chances were, and my suffering from cold mercifully mitigated my fear.

Twice the guide rubbed my hands with brandy, and once I had to halt and recover for a moment, failing and losing my hold. Believe it or not, the deep footsteps of our ascent were already quite lost and covered by the new snow since our halt, and even had they been visible, the guide would not have retraced them. He did what I did not at first understand, but what I soon saw to be wise. He took a steep slant downward over the face of the snow slope, and though such a pitch of descent a little unnerved me, it was well in the end. For when we had gone down perhaps 900 feet, or a thousand in perpendicular distance even I, half numb and fainting, could feel that the storm was less violent. Another two hundred and the flakes could be seen not driving in flashes past but separately falling. Then in some few minutes we could see the slope for a very long way downwards quite clearly ; then soon after—we saw far below us the place where the mountain-side merged easily into the plain of that cup or basin whence we had started.

When we saw this the guide said to me, " Hold your stick thus, if you are strong enough, and let yourself slide." I could just hold it, in spite of the cold. Life was returning to me with intolerable pain. We shot down the slope almost as quickly as falling, but it was evidently safe to do so, as the end was clearly visible, and had no break or rock in it.

So we reached the plain below, and entered the little shed, and thence looking up, we saw the storm above us ;

but no one could have told it for what it was. Here, below, was silence, and the terror and raging above seemed only a great trembling cloud occupying the mountain. Then we set our faces down the ravine by which we had come up, and so came down to where the snow changed to rain. When we got right down into the valley of the Rhone, we found it all roofed with cloud, and the higher trees were white with snow, making a line like a tide mark on the slopes of the hills.

I re-entered the "Bear", silent and angered, and not accepting the humiliation of that failure. Then having eaten, I determined in equal silence to take the road like any other fool ; to cross the Furka by a fine highroad like any tourist, and to cross the St. Gothard by another fine highroad, as millions had done before me, and not to look heaven in the face again till I was back after my long detour, on the straight road again for Rome.

35. THE STRANGENESS AND CHARM OF JAPAN

(From *Japan*)

LAFCADIO HEARN

My own impressions of Japan—Japan as seen in the white sunshine of a perfect spring day—had doubtless much in common with the average of such experiences. I remember especially the wonder and the delight of the vision. The wonder and the delight have never passed away : they are often revived for me even now, by some chance happening, after fourteen years of sojourn. But the reason of these feelings was difficult to learn—or at least to guess ; for I cannot yet claim to know much about Japan. . . . Long ago the best and dearest Japanese friend I ever had said to me, a little before his death : “ When you find, in four or five years more, that you cannot understand the Japanese at all, then you will begin to know something about them.” After having realised the truth of my friend’s prediction—after having discovered that I cannot understand the Japanese at all—I feel better qualified to attempt this essay.

As first perceived, the outward strangeness of things in Japan produces (in certain minds, at least) a queer thrill impossible to describe—a feeling of weirdness which comes to us only with the perception of the totally

unfamiliar. You find yourself moving through queer small streets full of odd small people, wearing robes and sandals of extraordinary shapes ; and you can scarcely distinguish the sexes at sight. The houses are constructed and furnished in ways alien to all your experience ; and you are astonished to find that you cannot conceive the use or meaning of numberless things on display in the shops. Food-stuffs of unimaginable derivation ; utensils of enigmatic forms ; emblems incomprehensible of some mysterious belief ; strange masks and toys that commemorate legends of gods or demons ; odd figures, too, of the gods themselves, with monstrous ears and smiling faces—all these you may perceive as you wander about ; though you must also notice telegraph-poles and typewriters, electric lamps and sewing-machines. Everywhere on signs and hangings, and on the backs of people passing by, you will observe wonderful Chinese characters ; and the wizardry of all these texts makes the dominant tone of the spectacle.

Further acquaintance with this fantastic world will in nowise diminish the sense of strangeness evoked by the first vision of it. You will soon observe that even the physical actions of the people are unfamiliar—that their work is done in ways the opposite of Western ways. Tools are of surprising shapes, and are handled after surprising methods : the blacksmith squats at his anvil, wielding a hammer such as no Western smith could use without long practice ; the carpenter pulls instead of pushes his extraordinary plane and saw. Always the left is the right side and the right side the wrong ; and keys

must be turned to open or close a lock, in what we are accustomed to think the wrong direction. Mr. Percival Lowell has truthfully observed that the Japanese speak backwards, read backwards, write backwards—and that this is “only the *abc* of their contrariety”. For the habit of writing backwards there are obvious evolutionary reasons; and the requirements of Japanese calligraphy sufficiently explained why the artist pushes his brush and pencil instead of pulling it. But why, instead of putting the thread through the eye of the needle, should the Japanese maiden slip the eye of the needle over the point of the thread? Perhaps the most remarkable, out of a hundred possible examples of antipodal action, is furnished by the Japanese art of fencing. The swordsman, delivering his blow with both hands, does not pull the blade towards him in the moment of striking, but pushes it from him. He uses it, indeed, as other Asiatics do, not on the principle of the wedge, but of the saw; yet there is a pushing motion where we should expect a pulling-motion in the stroke. . . . These and other forms of unfamiliar action are strange enough to suggest the notion of a humanity even physically as little related to us as might be the population of another planet—the notion of some anatomical unlikeness. No such unlikeness, however, appears to exist; and all the oppositeness probably implies, not so much the outcome of a human experience entirely independent of Aryan experience, as the outcome of an experience evolutionally younger than our own.

Yet that experience has been one of no mean order.

Its manifestations do not merely startle : they also delight. The delicate perfection of workmanship, the light strength and grace of objects, the power manifest to obtain the best results with the least material, the achieving of mechanical ends by the simplest possible means, the comprehension of irregularity as aesthetic value, the shapeliness and perfect taste of everything, the sense displayed of harmony in tints of colours—all this must convince you at once that our Occident has much to learn from this remote civilisation, not only in matters of art and taste, but in matters likewise of economy and utility.. It is no barbarian fancy that appeals to you in those amazing porcelains, those astonishing embroideries, those wonders of lacquer and ivory and bronze, which educate imagination in unfamiliar ways. No : these are the products of a civilisation which became, within its own limits, so exquisite that none but an artist is capable of judging its manufactures—a civilisation that can be termed imperfect only by those who would also term imperfect the Greek civilisation of three thousand years ago.

36. ON "THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS"

(From *Letters to John Doe*—"JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY.")

"OLD FAG"

MY DEAR JOHN,

I was supposed to be suffering from a nervous breakdown. I wasn't really, but never mind that. If I had been, nothing more soothing, charming, and *interesting* could have fallen into my hands than *The Wind in the Willows*. I read it, for the most part, on the river bank, near Tintern Abbey. An ideal spot for such a book, for is not the first chapter entitled "The River Bank"? It was not one of those lost summers, when we hardly ever feel the sun, but a real summer, I think it was 1913, for I remember wondering how it was that, like you, I had never heard of this book before. It had been published five years previously.

I remember also the young squirrel that kept me company all one hot afternoon. It ventured on to my shoulder even. It must have sensed that I was reading about its own kith and kin.

First *The Wind in the Willows* attracted me because it is beautifully written. Kenneth Grahame has style, or manner, if you like, which is a delight in itself, simple and pellucid, as clear running water. Next, it attracted me because here was natural history presented in a new way. And a wee real thrill on every page: all delicious make-

belief, of course, with animals—the Water Rat (who was Ulysses), Mr. Badger, Mr. Toad, the Mole, the Willow-Wren, the Otter, the Hedgehog and the rest of them—playing the parts of men and children, yet always animals.

After you have read *The Wind in the Willows*, the river bank and the woods, fields and hedgerows will have a fresh interest for you. They are peopled with queer folks. Your imagination will be quickened, your vision enlarged.

The Mole in his dark and lowly little house had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his home, with brooms, dusters, on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of water ; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms.

Why shouldn't he suddenly exclaim, " Oh, blow! hang spring-cleaning! " and throw it all up? Spring was in the air, something from the upper regions was calling him and he responded. " Up we go! up we go! " up the steep little tunnel to the sun and air.

In his delirium of joy he is hailed by an elderly Rabbit and is nearly fined for trespass.

Tired of exploration, Mr. Mole sat on the bank and looked across the river. There he saw a dark hole in the bank opposite ; what a lovely bijou riverside residence! Then we have this vivid little picture :

" As he gazed, something bright and small seemed to twinkle down in the heart of the dark hole, vanished, then twinkled once more like a tiny star. But it could hardly be a star in such an unlikely situation ; and it was too glittering and small for a glow-worm. Then, as he

looked, it winked at him, and so declared itself to be an eye ; and a small face began gradually to grow up round it, like a frame round a picture.

“ A brown little face, with whiskers.

“ ‘ Hullo, Mole! ’ said the Water Rat.

“ ‘ Hullo, Rat! ’ said the Mole.

“ ‘ Would you like to come over? ’ inquired the Rat presently.”

* * * *

But you must read the idyll, and the romance, and the adventure of it all for yourself. For one day these two dropped down the river for a day's outing. What an outing for inquisitive little creatures. They got lost in the Wild Wood (a fine chapter) where they met the Rabbits—a mixed lot—and Mr. Badger—dear old Badger (simply hates Society, but very fond of children). And beyond the Wild Wood they came to the Wide World. They were footsore and weary, when they met the Otter and became friends forthwith.

They make friends also with Mr. Toad. His insufferable conceit became unbearable to his companions. But he is a real human Toad, always wanting to sing and make speeches to the exclusion of everyone else. He had a new hobby every time you met him. He must always be in the fashion. To-day he takes them all out in his brand-new wager-boat for an afternoon on the river—to their dismay. Rat is disgruntled. “ ‘ Once ’, he said to the Mole, ‘ it was nothing but sailing. Then he tired of that and took to punting. Nothing would please him but to

punt all day and every day, and a nice mess he made of it. Last year it was house-boating, and we all had to go and stay with him in his house-boat and pretend we liked it. He was going to spend the rest of his life in a house-boat. It's all the same. Whatever he takes up, he gets tired of it, and starts on something fresh.'

" 'Such a good fellow, too,' remarked the Otter, reflectively. 'But no stability—especially in a boat.' "

The stories the Otter tells the Mole, and the Rat tells the Otter, and the tales they all of them tell each other reveal a world we can visualise. Here is life we can but imagine, a world we cannot enter, but all as real, as fascinating, as intriguing as the life and world we do know.

After many days it is all over!

" Sometimes, in the course of long summer evenings, the friends would take a stroll together in the Wild Wood, now successfully tamed so far as they were concerned: and it was pleasing to see how respectfully they were greeted by the inhabitants, and how the mother-weasels would bring their young ones to the mouths of their holes, and say, pointing, 'Look, baby! There goes the great Mr. Toad! And that's the gallant Water Rat, a terrible fighter, walking along o' him! And yonder comes the famous Mr. Mole, of whom you so often have heard your father tell! ' "

The Wind in the Willows you must know, dear John, is a classic.

Yours sincerely,

OLD FAG

37. WALKING TOURS

R. L. STEVENSON

It must not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good ; and none more vivid, in spite of canting dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humours—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack on, or takes it off, with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the arrival. Whatever he does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel ; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain.

Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be gone upon alone. If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name ; it is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. A walking tour should be gone upon alone, because freedom is of the essence ; because you should be able to stop and

go on, and follow this way or that, as the freak takes you ; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl. And then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take colour from what you see. You should be as a pipe for any wind to play upon. " I cannot see the wit ", says Hazlitt, " of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country "—which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow, to jar on the meditative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveller feels more than coldly towards his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the hedge and, like Christian on a similar occasion, " give three leaps and go on singing." And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic ; the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the straps over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods, this, in which a man takes the road, is the best.

" Give me the clear blue sky over my head," says Hazlitt, " and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding

road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy."

Bravo! Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practice that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration; they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion; and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas, when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk, it gradually neutralises and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind.

In the course of a day's walk, you see, there is much variance in the mood. From the exhilaration of the start, to the happy phlegm of the arrival, the change is certainly great. As the day goes on, the traveller moves from the one extreme towards the other. He becomes more and more incorporated with the material landscape, and the open-air drunkenness grows upon him with great strides, until he posts along the road, and sees everything about him, as in a cheerful dream. The first is certainly brighter, but the second stage is the more peaceful.

Nor must I forget to say a word on bivouacs. You come to a milestone on a hill, or some place where deep ways meet under trees; and off goes the knapsack, and

down you sit and smoke a pipe in the shade. You sink into yourself, and the birds come round and look at you ; and your smoke dissipates upon the afternoon under the blue dome of heaven ; and the sun lies warm upon your feet, and the cool air visits your neck and turns aside your open shirt. If you are not happy, you must have an evil conscience. You may dally as long as you like by the roadside. It is almost as if the millennium were arrived, when we shall throw our clocks and watches over the housetop, and remember time and seasons no more. Not to keep hours for a lifetime is, I was going to say, to live for ever. You have no idea, unless you have tried it, how endlessly long is a summer's day, that you measure out by hunger, and bring to an end when you are drowsy.

But it is at night, and after dinner, that the 'best' hour comes. There are no such pipes to be smoked as those that follow a good day's march ; the flavour of the tobacco is a thing to be remembered, it is so dry and aromatic, so full and so fine.

If the evening be warm, there is nothing better in life than to lounge before the inn door in the sunset, or lean over the parapet of the bridge, to watch the weeds and the quick fishes. It is then, if ever, that you taste Joviality to the full significance of that audacious word. Your muscles are so agreeably slack, you feel so clean and so strong and so idle, that whether you move or sit still, whatever you do is done with pride and a kingly sort of pleasure. You fall in talk with anyone, wise or foolish, drunk or sober. And it seems as if a hot walk purged you, more than of anything else, of all narrowness and

pride, and left curiosity to play its part freely, as in a child or a man of science. You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch provincial humours develop themselves before you, now as a laughable farce, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale.

38. ELIZABETH. FRY

(From *Men and Women of Ideas*)

GUY N. POCOCK

THE essential character of the English has in most respects remained the same for many centuries. All through our history we pride ourselves that the spirit of humanity and kindness, the sense of sportsmanship and fair-play, have been typical English traits.

All this is undoubtedly true ; and yet it is a terrible and astounding fact that a century ago our criminal law and our treatment of convicts, and even of innocent persons awaiting trial, was more savage and cruel than in any other country in the world, or in any other age in history.

All over England the prisons were in a shocking state. Local jails were actually owned by heartless and dissolute jailers, who sold to the prisoners the use of the barest necessities of life and subjected those who could not pay to horrible torments.

In Newgate Prison, as elsewhere, prisoners of all ages were herded together ; innocent persons awaiting trial, and little children, were crowded together day and night with the most criminal and vicious. It is a heart-breaking story which one cannot look into without horror and shame.

In May 1780 was born in Norwich a child who in after life was destined to rouse the conscience of England—and indeed of all Europe—and to introduce the spirit of humanity into our treatment of criminals—an interest which was never more marked than at the present time. This child was Elizabeth Gurney, better known to-day by her married name of Mrs. Fry. John Gurney and his wife both came of Quaker families, so that the little Elizabeth was brought up in a tradition of kindliness and humanity, though she had a fear of effusive “religion”, and did not deny herself the ordinary social pleasures of Norwich life.

When she was nineteen it happened that a Travelling Friend from America, a Quaker gentleman named William Savery, visited Norwich. His talk impressed her greatly. She met him again in London; and from that time onward she “gave up her scarlet riding-habit”—as a symbol of the pleasures which she considered unworthy—and began her life of devotion to the poor and degraded.

In 1800 she was married, and for a time family duties did not allow her to do more than visit the slums of London and alleviate distress wherever she found it. Then came her epoch-making visit to Newgate Prison.

It is difficult for us to-day to visualise the scene: Hundreds of women, half-naked and dishevelled, screaming at the cage, tearing at each other, and shrieking for a pittance of money or food from their dissolute or poverty-stricken friends outside; and among them little children, and young mothers broken with misery and awaiting

death by hanging. It was a pandemonium to appal the strongest, and even the governor and prison officials warned Mrs. Fry that nothing could be done.

Yet into this hell Elizabeth Fry introduced order and discipline by the strength of her personality and the power of her religious belief. For the first time she applied the theory that punishment should aim not at revenge but reformation.

How did she do it? She refused to believe that these wild women were so depraved that there was no goodness left in them at all. She appealed to them through the children. Would they let her fit up an empty cell as a schoolroom, where the children could be saved from the horrors of the open prison? Next week when she came for the women's decision she was received with tears of joy.

Next she formed a committee of Quaker ladies to act as visitors, providers of clothes, education, and religious instruction ; and when all was ready she drew up a code of rules for the acceptance of the prisoners themselves. They were to divide themselves into classes, each under a monitor, and bind themselves to work in an orderly manner without swearing, fighting, or gaming. The wondering women unanimously agreed, and within a month it was as if a miracle had happened. Sheriffs and prison authorities could hardly believe their eyes ; and soon all London was talking of this wonderful Quaker woman who with her winning voice and calm authority had brought order out of chaos and given hope to the despairing.

In 1818 Mrs. Fry gave evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons. Calmly, without boastfulness or exaggeration, she explained the principles upon which she acted, the keynote of which was reformation, not revenge.

From this time onwards Newgate became a sort of fashionable show, and Mrs. Fry herself was received by the highest in the land. Old Queen Charlotte, blazing with diamonds and surrounded by peers and bishops, received the Quaker woman in the Mansion House. Kings, queens, emperor and empress were soon to count her as an honoured friend, and years later, in 1841, she was interviewed by the young Queen Victoria.

But unsought fame did not lessen her activities ; and now she turned her attention to the mitigation of the frightful capital punishment laws, but met with much opposition till Sir Robert Peel took up the gauntlet ; for the judges themselves believed in wholesale hangings.

At this time prisoners who escaped the gallows were sent in droves to the convict ships, and transported to Botany Bay. Five or six times a year a train of open wagons left Newgate crammed with women heavily fettered or chained together, and followed by the scum of London, amid scenes of horrible and degrading riot. On reaching the ships the women were herded below decks with nothing to do but curse and fight and recount their crimes. When the horrors of the voyage were over and they reached Botany Bay, they were landed without money or proper clothing, and " not so much as a hut in which they could take refuge, so that they were left to lie

in the streets". Often, too, these wretched women were accompanied by their children, whom the authorities refused to support.

Mrs. Fry determined that such iniquity should not go on. She first persuaded the prison governor to hire closed cabs instead of open carts, and herself followed the procession in her chaise. The usual hideous riot was thus avoided. On board the ship Mrs. Fry divided the women into classes, and provided them with work for the voyage—the making of patchwork quilts for the most part. The ship remained in the river for five weeks, and when the time came to sail she held a solemn service, while the women sobbed bitterly, for they knew that they should see her no more. Every ship was thus visited, and the "Newgate women" became noted for their orderliness and good behaviour.

She then interviewed Lord Melbourne about the condition of the women in the Australian settlements, and obtained to a great extent the better conditions for which she asked.

The fame of Elizabeth Fry had now spread all over Europe, and she began to make extended tours in France, Germany, Denmark and other countries, visiting prisons, asylums and foundling hospitals, and being received by kings, queens and ministers with the greatest respect and affection. Tours in England and Scotland followed, with the same excellent and far-reaching results. Not only did she attack the dreadful abuses of the common prison room, but she fought strenuously against the opposite extreme of solitary confinement, especially in dark cells.

Classification of prisoners, useful employment, and strict control—these were the main principles of her reform system; but before all she placed the teaching of the Gospel, without which, she said, she could have effected nothing.

Elizabeth Fry was not destined to finish her life in the full tide of happiness which she deserved. Like all reformers she had been misunderstood and misrepresented by people of a stable type of mind, though this never affected her purpose. And now as she approached old age calamities fell upon her in quick succession—loss of money, loss of health, loss of many near relatives. But though bowed down by sorrow and suffering, she never for a moment lost faith in her high calling.

In the women's church in Norwich prison there hangs a portrait of Elizabeth Fry. When one looks at that portrait and considers the great and growing interest in prison reform and the welfare of women prisoners and ex-prisoners, one realises the debt of honour and gratitude we owe to that Quaker lady who lived in Norwich a hundred years ago and spent her life in giving hope to the hopeless.

39. A MINER'S WORK

(From *Our Fellow Men*)

H. V. MORTON

NEARLY every variety of industrial squalor can be studied in the neighbourhood of the Five Towns, where the private enterprise of the nineteenth century has turned a fair land into hell.

In one of the dreary townships of this district, which are strung together like black pearls on a string of motor-omnibuses, lives Bill, a Staffordshire miner.

His day begins at 5 a.m. While he puts on the garments that are dusty and polished with coal, his wife rises and, in the little kitchen-living-room downstairs, prepares his breakfast and what is known in Staffordshire as the "snapping", usually bread and margarine, or bread and cheese, which the miner takes with him to his work.

He kisses her good-bye—and the miner's parting from his wife every day is always, consciously or unconsciously, like that of a soldier going off to war—and, clattering in his clogs, awakening the echoes in the dark little street, he goes to the corner where the workmen's bus will come along with its yellow windows and its smell of men and tobacco. This is a luxury, and a welcome one. Bill's daily ride to the pit mops up two shillings from a meagre income, but it saves him a long and tedious tramp.

The pit-head and the mine chimneys loom up on a crest of ground, somewhat rather fine and heroic in the pale light which is not yet strong to expose the shame of the broken earth, the squalor and the untidiness, the air of makeshift and the dirt. Bill gives in his check at the lamp-room, is given a safety lamp, and is searched for matches. He then waits with the other members of his shift for the cage that will plunge them into the depths of the earth.

Mining was, is, and always will be, a horrible calling, and one that a stranger shrinks from as terrifying and unnatural. But just as generations of men make a fisherman so generations of men who have striven below the ground make the modern miner. It is a calling that is born in man ; otherwise he could not endure it.

Therefore, with a casualness born of long experience, the men pack themselves into the wet and coal-grimed cage. The iron gates are shut, and the cage drops down, down, down into the earth. The walls of the shaft rush upwards, the air whistles past, and there is a bang and a rattle. The glow-worm lamps shine greenly in the cage, and the men look like souls consigned to hell.

Suddenly, the speed slackens ; then the cage appears to hesitate slightly as it stops, with a surprising gentleness, at the pit-bottom.

Here is a still, hushed world. Bill does not think, as you and I would, of the millions of tons of rock and earth above him. His one thought is to be at the coal face, ready stripped to shovel coal on the conveyor sharp at 7 a.m.

He sets off along the dark tunnel, an ordeal so like trench warfare at night, so like a man moving up to the front line in the darkness. He tramps on in silence, coming at length to the coal face.

On the earth above and in the depths below, machinery has altered the life of man. Bill, although technically a miner, is actually a coal-shoveller. The coal has been machine-cut and blasted. All the miners have to do is to shovel it like mad into a devouring monster known as the conveyor-belt. Seven and a half hours of coal shovelling, with a bare twenty minutes off for "snapping"—that is the slavery of the modern machine face collier.

The conveyor-belt is a noisy, jiggling trough that runs the length of the coal face. It can be fed at the rate of a ton a minute. The lobbers-on, as the miners are called, look like stokers shovelling for dear life.

In the afternoon the cage takes Bill up to the welcome light. He fills his lungs with the clean air and enjoys the first sudden glimpse of sunlight.

Bill's opinions on life? Here they are :

"The most wonderful thing about the miner is his wife. She is the magician who makes ends meet. Only God knows how.

"There are more Black Fridays than Good Fridays with the miner's pay envelope, and, roughly we average about £2 a week, taking the good with the bad.

"Out of that we must pay the Union, bus fare, and sometimes a levy if we break a lamp glass or tool. A good week means butter ; a bad week means margarine.

"The miner is a cheerful bloke : so was Tommy in the

trenches. Our work demands co-operation, which always brings out the best in men. It's also the kind of work that makes a man love his home.

"As far as this work goes, my belief is that far too much blood has been spilt at the call of private profit. I, and many another miner, believe that ninety per cent. of mine accidents could be avoided if the mines were State-owned.

"I think working hours should be reduced, so that some of our unemployed brothers could be brought in, and I think that minimum wages should be £3 a week, not to mention full pay when on the injured list. . . ."

Such are the words of Bill.

40. CONCLUSION

(From *Letters to my Grandson*, XXXV)

THE HON. STEPHEN COLERIDGE

MY DEAR ANTONY,

I have come now to the end of my citations for the present. My object, Antony, has been to rouse in your heart, if I can, a love, admiration, and reverence for the wonders to be found in the treasure-house of English prose literature.

I have only opened a little door here and there, so that you can peep in and see visions of splendour within.

Some day perhaps, when you have explored for yourself, you may feel surprised that in these letters I have quoted nothing from Sir John Eliot, or Addison, or Scott, or Thackeray, or Charles Lamb, or De Quincey, or Hazlitt, or other kings and princes of style innumerable. Many, many writers whom I have not quoted in these letters have adorned everything they touched, but do not seem to me to reach the snow-line or rise into great and moving eloquence. Charles Lamb, for example, never descends from his equable and altogether pleasing level, far above the plain of the commonplace, but neither does he reach up to the lofty altitudes of the lonely peaks ; and if I began to quote from him, I see no obstacle to my

quoting his entire works! And of Addison, Johnson wrote, "His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour"; and he adds, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

In selecting such passages as I have in these letters I have necessarily followed my own taste, and taste—as I said when I first began writing to you—is illusive. I could do no more than cite that which makes my own heart beat faster from a compelling sense of its nobility and beauty.

When I was young, Antony, I lived long in my father's house among his twelve thousand books, with his scholarly mind as my companion, and his exact memory as my guide; for more than a quarter of a century since those days I have lived in the more modest library of my own collecting, and have long learnt how much fine literature there is that I have never read and now can never read. But, Antony, you may not find, in these crowded days, even so much time for reading, or so much repose for study as I have found, and therefore it is that I have offered you in these letters the preferences of my lifetime, even though it has been the lifetime of one who makes no claim to be a literary authority.

As you look back at those from whom you have sprung, you will see that for five generations they have been men of letters—many distinguished, and one world-famous; and though I myself am but a puny link in the chain, yet I may perhaps afford you the opportunity of

hitching your wagon by and by to the star that has for so long ruled the destinies of our house.

Farewell, then, dear Antony ; and if " the dear God who loveth us " listens to the benedictions of the old upon their children's children, may He guide and bless you to your life's end.

Your loving old G.P.

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